THE·HEART·OF·THE·DOCTOR

MABEL·G·FOSTER

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MARGARET IN THE NORTH END (Page 250)

THE HEART OF THE DOCTOR

A Story of the Italian Quarter

BY

MABEL G. FOSTER

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QUEI GIORNI FELICI E PASSATI.

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THE HEART OF THE DOCTOR

CHAPTER I

A WAIF AND AN IDLER

Spring Hill Street begins at the square in front of the church of Santa Maria, runs over the crest of an ancient hill, and plunges down to the noisy thoroughfare on the west. At the crown of the hill is the burying-ground, with its trees, its weather-worn stones, its matchless view of the busy harbor.

Years ago this hill was the fashionable part of town, and traces of former elegance may still be seen in occasional colonial doorways and slant roofs, while here and there, in the lanes and byways, a lilac tree, the last of some patrician hedgerow, tosses its languorous perfume in the smiling face of each May sky.

But the grandeur of Spring Hill is gone, and if the spirits of dead aristocrats have hovered above the old graves, it has been their fate to see the

passing of damask and brocade and the incoming of new peoples from beyond the sea. The march of the foreign invasion has been continuous, and to-day may be seen in the winding streets and shadowy alleys the picturesque life of a dozen Italian provinces.

A man climbed the five stone steps which intervene between the street and the burying-ground. He was not old, yet he looked decrepit, and his hair was gray. At the top of the steps he paused and looked about him irresolutely. Brady, the custodian of the yard, always on the lookout for sight-seers, discovered the newcomer in an instant, and leaving the group of loungers gathered near the fountain, he came briskly forward.

"Like to see the stones, sir?" he asked, in his half respectful tone.

"No, no," said the stranger, nervously, "er . . . that is . . . no, no. I 'm not interested. I 'm waiting for some one . . . if there 's no objection."

"None in the world," replied Brady, in the tone of patient tolerance cultivated by long contact with an irresolute public. "Jest make yourself at home. There 's benches 'n' plenty uv fresh water. The oldest stone is down this path; date 1645 — David Perkins, and Patience, his wife."

The man made a deprecatory gesture.

"I won't trouble you," he said. "I 'll sit down over here, I think. Is it late? And shall I have to wait long?"

Brady scented some form of lunacy, and replied in the most soothing tone which could be assumed by a voice roughened by an out-door life of thirty years.

"Oh, no, not very long, I should n't think. It 's about three o'clock now."

"Is he usually very late?" queried the man, his gaze wandering vaguely toward the street.

"No, no," reassured Brady. "Who 'd you say you were waiting for?"

"The young man at the dispensary over there. Is he often very late?"

A light dawned upon Brady. Here was evidently a case for Burroughs, the student interne at St. Luke's Charitable Dispensary. He liked Burroughs. It was scarcely a month since the young man had brought him safely through a siege of neuritis, and he was therefore glad to put an interesting case in the student's way.

"You 'll find the doctor in his office at three-thirty, sharp. He 's never late, 'n' a better man fer his years you never saw. Can cure anything from corns to D. T.'s. You 'd better go early, fer

crowds comes ev'ry afternoon, and it 's first come, first served. He gives big cure fer small pay, 'n' ev'rybody 's treated alike."

This somewhat astounding statement had no effect upon the stranger. Brady was quick to realize that his eloquence was wasted.

"Half past three," muttered the man, — "half past three . . . then I must . . . yes; it 's high time, for I must be at my best when he comes. . . . See here," he added, buttonholing Brady and whispering confidentially, "you go back and talk to your friends. Don't let me keep you. I 'll sit here till I see him coming; then I 'll step over. . . . I say! do go. I 'm a bit nervous; I don't like to be talked to. I 'd rather be alone."

Brady yielded to the man's whim and rejoined the group at the fountain.

"There 's a crank over there waitin' ter see Burroughs. Guess I 'd better keep my eye on him," he said to his companions.

The stranger sat down on a bench near the gate. For a while he seemed oblivious to his surroundings. The dirty-faced children, romping in the shady paths, drew near for a critical inspection. They were used to strangers, for many people found their way to this graveyard, swallowed in the noise and grime of the city's slum.

The children cried "Hello, Mister!" as they cried it to all newcomers, but he paid no attention to them, and soon they drifted away. At length he shook himself together and looked cautiously about him. Brady and his following had apparently forgotten his existence; the children were gone; only a lean cat, intent upon a solitary English sparrow, crouched a few feet away.

Over on his left was a high, grass-grown mound surrounded by a green picket fence. Any child in the neighborhood would have told him in awe-stricken whispers that a dead horse was buried there. It was in fact the resting-place of unbaptized babes who had died more than a century ago. The stranger approached this mound, fumbled in his pocket, and took something out. He stood for a moment looking down at his left wrist. Then he turned and walked back to his bench. Ten minutes later he rose, adjusted his hat, and straightened his threadbare necktie. Then he walked with a firm, brisk step to where Brady and his companions were settling the affairs of church and state. He joined the group with an air of *bon-camaraderie*, exclaiming, —

"A glorious day, gentlemen, and good company, unless your faces deceive me. Let me introduce myself: John Maxon, of nowhere in particular, and at your service."

The men eyed him suspiciously; he took no notice of that, but babbled on.

"I've just come to town and made straight for this delightful locality. Lots of people here, gentlemen, lots of people; but just one whom I have come to see. That's Burroughs, the doctor across the way."

He looked slowly around the group, meeting the gaze of each man in turn without flinching, and yet afterward all spoke of the odd, blurred look in his eyes, — the look of an intoxicated person, yet different, but in just what way not one of them could tell.

"Do you all know Burroughs?" he asked after a pause, the hilarity quite gone from his face. The men nodded.

"Tell me about him."

Brady acted as spokesman.

"Is n't much to tell. Came here in March, 'n' has worked hard ever since. Saved lots uv lives, folks say. He's in the Medical School up town, 'n' works here for his board 'n' lodging. He don't put on no airs, 'n' the folks round here has got ter setting great stock by him already. They're mostly Eye-talians. That's about all there is ter tell, I guess."

"I will tell you something more about him, gen-

tlemen," said the stranger. His tone was perfectly normal now. He rose to his feet and gazed toward the harbor which met the little public park on the slope of the hill below the graveyard. He drew a deep breath, with a slight but sudden gesture of the hands.

"Lord!" he exclaimed, "what a spot this is."

It was mid-afternoon in May. Through the arching tree-boughs the harbor, alive with steamships, tugs, and schooners, lay smiling in the sunshine. There was a tang of salt in the air, and the wheeling gulls flashed their white wings against the blue above and the deeper blue below. The prim little paths of the graveyard, flecked with light and shade, echoed the rollicking voices of children. Along the wall the Italian women in their gay gowns and brilliant head scarfs, chattered in animated fashion while their stiffly swaddled *bambini* pulled at their full brown breasts. The sunlight was streaming upon their heads, and the trees and distant brick-red houses made a background Correggio might have loved to copy.

"Lord!" repeated the man, "what a spot this is!"

His enthusiasm awakened no response in his hearers. They were so accustomed to the scene that it had ceased long since to impress them.

"Gentlemen," said the stranger, turning once more to the group and speaking with a sad dignity, "this beautiful scene moves me to speak of something which has been long hidden in my heart. Years ago I loved a beautiful woman. When I asked her father's permission to court her he told me that she had been promised to another in her childhood. A strange, old-fashioned arrangement, surely. After a time she married. About a year later she died. As I was an old friend, I went to the funeral at her husband's magnificent country estate many miles from here. It was spring. The fruit trees and lilac bushes were in bloom. God! How the beauty of it all hurt me! I saw her lying in her casket as stately as a waxen queen with her dead baby on her breast. At the grave, just before the casket was lowered, her little brother broke from his mother's side and cast himself sobbing across the coffin. I had never taken much notice of the child before, but as I saw his pale profile against the black casket I saw her face in miniature, and when they lifted him up, although he was weeping, I saw that his eyes were like hers.

"That night I left America and began years of wandering. I met adventures and I saw poverty. But throughout all my experiences I was resolved that some day I would return and bestow upon that

boy the love I had borne his sister; an idle fancy, perhaps, but nevertheless I cherished it. A week ago I drifted back to the old scenes only to learn that the parents were dead, their fortune wrecked, and that my love's brother was in this city struggling to secure a medical education. The man I am talking about is Burroughs."

The stranger paused while his hearérs shifted uneasily upon the benches and looked wonderingly at each other and at him. After a moment he continued: —

"See, now, gentlemen, how the matter stands. I have come back a poor man, without position or friends, broken in health and dependent upon . . . medicine . . . very dependent. Now when the boy needs help, friends, everything, I can do nothing for him. To-day I have resolved to see him and to tell him what I have told you. He will at least accept my good intentions. More than that I cannot offer. I am a feeble man, a wreck before my time . . . a wanderer, an outcast . . . Oh, my God!"

His voice had risen to a wail and he was trembling. He sank upon a neighboring bench and his head rested upon his breast. The men around the fountain were very still. They had been strangely moved by this man's story, a story so foreign in its

delicacy and pathos to anything they had known in their coarse lives. Yet they were nonplussed by the frankness with which the confession had been made and did not know what to say, until O'Connell, the one-legged man, searching for something to say, exclaimed, —

"See, sir, your wrist is bleeding."

The stranger pushed up the left sleeve of his coat and looked at his arm. There was a small white lump upon the inside of the wrist like that caused by the sting of an insect. In the centre of the spot was the mark of a tiny incision from which a drop of blood was oozing. Other drops had evidently preceded this one and the coat sleeve had smeared them up and down the wrist.

"It is nothing," said the man, quickly, — "nothing, I assure you, gentlemen. A pin prick; nothing more. Pray do not be alarmed."

He rose unsteadily and held out his hand to Brady.

"Good-by, good-by," he said, plaintively. "You have been very kind. I will sit by the gate and watch for my young friend. Half past three, you said? It must be nearly that time now. Good-by, gentlemen, good-by."

He shambled down the path with hanging head, and finding his seat near the entrance, peered

through the iron fence of the yard at the dingy brick front of St. Luke's Dispensary.

"Holy mother of Mary!" cried Dolan, as soon as the man was out of earshot, "what 's the matter with him?"

"He 's got the D. T.'s, I believe," said McCarthy. His opinion had great weight, for he had experienced delirium tremens seven times and could give the medical fraternity valuable points in diagnosis.

"Maybe, maybe," said Brady, wagging his head sagely, "but I think more likely he 's looney."

"Why the deuce did he tell us that yarn?" queried Smith. "We 're nothin' ter him, er he ter us. That 's a queerer, ter start on."

"Oh, I tell yer, he 's looney," returned Brady, conclusively. "See how scairt he wuz at first 'n' then he spurted up 'n' acted like a gentleman 'n' then slumped down agen. He 's plain off his head, I say."

"Then you 'd orter call the cop," said Dolan. "'T ain't safe ter have him loose. Might up 'n' shoot the doctor, fer all his talk about lovin' him."

"I won't do nothin' about gettin' him pulled in," said Brady. "It 's not in my job. That was a yarn he told, anyhow. He 's harmless. If I sent fer the cop ev'ry time a crank come in this here

yard, I 'd be runnin' my legs off from mornin' 'tel night. There would n't be no sidewalk 'tween here 'n' Station Eight; I 'd a-hoofed it off long ago, 'n' none er you blokes would be at large, neither."

The men laughed, as Brady expected they would, for he was an autocrat in a small way with his modest following.

Just then the clock on the church of Santa Maria chimed the half hour, and O'Connell, looking toward the street, exclaimed, —

" There comes the doctor ! "

But the man at the gate was gone.

CHAPTER II

THE STOLEN PATIENTS

THE low-ceiled waiting room of St. Luke's was crowded that afternoon. The breeze which blew in at the open window was too languid to freshen the vitiated atmosphere in which the patient herd of Italian men, women, and children awaited their interviews with the student interne. Sometimes a swaddled bambino gave vent to his feelings in a doleful wail. Now and then two women, with gold earrings dangling nearly to their shoulders, exchanged a few words in a dialect almost unintelligible to a high class Italian. For the most part, however, the room was very quiet, for the dispensary was an awesome place to these simple people, and the doctor a sort of demigod whose practice of medicine was a mystery unapproachable.

At length the silence was broken. The office door was opened quickly, an Italian in corduroys, his hand neatly bandaged, emerged and made his way to the street. Then the interne appeared in the low doorway and uttered his oft-repeated call, "Next patient!"

A woman rose timidly and went into the office. As the door closed upon her, a brisk little Italian, well-shaven, well-dressed, and wearing a pince-nez astride his aquiline nose, entered the waiting room. Turning now and then to look at the office door, as if to catch the first intimation that it was about to be opened, he went quietly from group to group talking earnestly and with forceful gestures. Some of the people shook their heads, but nearly all to whom he spoke listened with that look of eager confidence which the lower class Italians fix upon those whom they consider their superiors. It is much the same look one sees in the eyes of a good-natured dog when his master is talking to him. As soon as the brisk Italian had gone the rounds of the waiting room he went stealthily into the street and was immediately followed by nearly all the occupants of the room. A moment later the student dismissed his patient and paused with the well-known words of summons unspoken.

"Hello!" he exclaimed instead, "where are my patients?"

A very small boy with very big black eyes rose to explain that they had gone with an Italian Signore who knew a better doctor.

"H'm," said Burroughs to himself; "the emissary of that Spanish quack. Spanish! From the

west bank of the Jordan, I fancy. He 'd better look out how he sends that whipper-snapper to interfere with my practice. Next patient!"

Those who were left rose in a body. There was a man, a woman, and several children of various sizes. These people usually go in family parties to consult the physician, and the student, being used to the phenomenon, asked at once, —

"Which of you is sick?"

With one accord they pointed to the child which the woman carried in her arms.

"'Er ver' seek-a. She leg-a 'urt-a. She back 'urt-a. Mia madre say you-a mek-a vell-a. Ve come-a Italia seex mont'. I talk-a Inglese, see! You-a tell-a me-a, I tell-a 'eem-a."

"The father and mother may come in," said the student, decisively. "The interpreter is out, so you may come, boy, to do the talking. The rest stay here."

At a word from the boy the younger children subsided sadly, and the others went into the office. Burroughs made a long examination of the little limbs and back; then he consulted his books, as student-doctors sometimes find it wise to do. After a few moments' thought he looked gravely at the big-eyed boy.

"Listen carefully, my lad," he said, "and tell

your father just what I say. Your sister must go to the hospital and have an operation performed on her back. If she goes she can be made well. Tell it straight; be sure."

While he was speaking the parents' eyes had been glued upon Burroughs's face. Now they looked eagerly at their interpreter. The boy must have repeated the message correctly, for at his words the man and woman looked aghast, and they gestured wildly as they told the boy what to reply. At the mention of the hospital the little girl herself began to wail, and the children in the waiting-room, hearing the cry, lifted up their voices.

"Mio padre say bambina no go-a 'ospit'l. 'E say 'e teck-a care-a bambina. No go-a 'ospit'l. Bad-a, bad-a, bad-a!"

Burroughs argued long and earnestly, but the Italians were unmoved. They had that inborn fear of institutions which is peculiar to their class. The mother soothed the little one's grief, and replaced the untidy garments upon the wasted body. The child had remarkably beautiful blue eyes, inherited no one could tell whence, and perhaps it was their look of unexpressed agony that caused the student to make a last effort in her behalf. It was time wasted. The Italians lapsed into a stolid silence, paid the nominal fee of ten

cents required by the directors of the dispensary, and withdrew, taking their numerous progeny.

"A lamb sacrificed to stupidity," mused Burroughs when they were gone. "But I 'm glad they did n't fall into that Spaniard's trap. There 's no knowing what tomfoolery he would have led them into, or what he would have charged them."

The Italians with their retinue of little ones had scarcely turned the corner of the street before the dapper henchman of the Spanish doctor joined them. He saw their excitement, and overheard enough of their conversation to learn that the hospital and an operation had been suggested.

"Why did you go to that dispensary?" he asked, suavely, in Italian. "You have to wait a long time for your turn, and that young fellow is not a doctor. A poor nobody, he is, who is trying to learn how to be a doctor. He comes here to practice on the poor Italian people because he thinks you will never know how many mistakes he makes. He has told you to take the little child to a hospital, it is probable. Yes! That is because he does not know what to do for her. An operation, you say? It is absurd. The good doctor of whom I told you will cure without an operation. He will give a large bottleful of the finest of medicine. And the little child will be well at once.

No hospital, no operation. See, here is the place. Come!"

He smiled as benignly as the wolf in the fable, and led them up the steps of the Spanish doctor's office. They followed him like a flock of silly sheep with their one little lamb which was to be sacrificed.

That evening Burroughs entertained company in the office of the dispensary. Raymond, his guest, had been a junior in the medical school when Burroughs was a freshman, and for some reason the big, handsome upper classman had taken a fancy to the new student whose shyness and reserve prevented him from being one of the leaders of his class. Burroughs was now completing his junior year, and Raymond, who was well established in an uptown practice, had proposed his friend as interne at St. Luke's, and sometimes left his snug office to lend a hand in the work at the dispensary.

To-night his visit was purely a social one, and he had brought his guitar. He sat with his feet a trifle higher than was necessary and picked lazily at his instrument. Raymond's well-shaped hands showed to great advantage when fingering the orange-fronted guitar, as no one knew better than their owner. Burroughs, with his hands thrust in

his pockets, sat tilted against the wall in an uncompromisingly stiff-backed chair, and he beamed upon his friend with that look of hopeless admiration which a quiet, plodding fellow feels toward a brilliant comrade.

The room was so small that it seemed quite full of men. It was an odd, shabby place. The walls were hung with dull green paper; there was an office desk with a double row of medical books above it; an operating-table, and an air-tight stove, the latter always surmounted by a tea kettle. Since La Signorina, the interpreter nurse, had persuaded Burroughs not to keep his blacking-brushes on the mantel behind the stove, that useful place was decorated with an austere row of medicine bottles, and presented the appearance of a diminutive pharmacy.

Over the mantel was a large picture. It represented a handsome Saint Bernard in the close embrace of a little child. "Kid with a Dog," Burroughs called it. On the corner of the frame was a jointed mulatto doll holding a pink bonbon in her hands. She was an old occupant of the office, placed there for the entertainment of children, but Burroughs said Raymond was the only child who ever played with her.

In this room, once a month, the board of lady-

managers met and laid plans as to what they would do when St. Luke's new building was constructed. In the mean time, Burroughs and La Signorina, making the best of their limited facilities, drew about them an ever-increasing clientele of Italian people who believed in them for their honest dealing and unfailing faithfulness.

The two men sat without conversation for a time. Burroughs was not skillful at setting the ball rolling, and Raymond was absorbed in his efforts on the guitar. At length, resting his head upon the comfortable high back of his rocker, he thrummed a lively strain and began to sing unctuously the ballad of "Sweet Rosy O'Grady." Whereat Burroughs, who abhorred sentimentality, tilted his face toward the ceiling and gave utterance to a long, mournful howl, like the ki-yi of a disappointed puppy. Raymond ceased singing at once and put down his guitar. He always stopped when Burroughs resorted to extreme measures.

"Well, what have you been doing lately, old man?" he asked.

"The usual things."

"Has anything funny happened?"

"Yes; more or less funny. Do you remember Mrs. Langoni, the Irishwoman married to the Italian over on Benediction Alley? She's up to

her old antics again. In a dying condition, of course. 'I 've a pain in ivry pairt o' me body,' was about all she would say when I called yesterday, excepting that she stopped groaning long enough to sit up and say, 'Me throat 's sore clare down ter here.' And she ran her finger from her pharynx to her diaphragm."

"She 's a sort of a giraffe, is n't she?" laughed Raymond. "It 's hysteria, I suppose."

"That is exactly what it is. I told La Signorina that if she could manage to upset a pailful of ice-water over her it would do her more good than all the medicine in the world."

"Who looks out for her?"

"Poor little Mamie, as usual. Langoni is out in Westerville working on the new aqueduct, and Mamie, besides taking care of her mother, does the cooking and the washing and ironing, carries around the little baby, watches to see that the middle-sized baby does n't swallow matches, and that the big baby does n't fall out of the window. It made me very cross to see her working so hard."

"It is rather hard on the little girl," said Raymond, picking up his guitar once more and thrumming lightly.

"Well, I 've put a stop to it," went on Bur-

roughs, vigorously. "I went and saw the truant-officer, and to-morrow Miss Mamie will be whisked off to school. Then her mother will have to stop groaning and go to work."

"Good for you, Burroughs! You are grasping the situation down here excellently. What else has happened?"

"I christened a baby last night."

"Ye gods!"

"Yes; Razzetti's wife begged me to when she found her child could live but a few minutes after its birth. The church allows any one to do it if necessary. There was no time to send for the priest, and so I did it."

"Well, what shall we hear next! Burroughs, you will get famous in this district if you keep on as you have begun."

"I think not. And by the way, that Spanish doctor drew off all my patients this afternoon. Nobody stayed but a family with a sick baby that needed to go to the hospital. I could not persuade them to take her, I 'm sorry to say."

"These people are extremely afraid of hospitals. You will meet that difficulty constantly in your work here. And you will encounter that 'Spaniard' at every turn. All the men who have been at St. Luke's since the dispensary was established

have had to fight him, and they have usually been beaten."

"Well, he shall not beat me," exclaimed Burroughs, with spirit. "I am not down here to do missionary work, or because I love the dear people — for I don't. I am here because I can get my board and lodging, and some splendid practical experience. But, by the Lord Harry! I won't sit still and see a lot of poor fools duped, even if they do tell lies, and are horribly dirty."

"You will do well if you can beat that rascal," Raymond said, earnestly. "But I warn you against that Italian who works for him. It is said that the fellow represents some powerful secret society, and that the common people are afraid of him. I beg of you, be on your guard, for I have no mind to have you get a knife in your back, especially since I advised you to come here."

"Don't worry about me. I shall not do enough to get the secret societies down on me."

"I am not so sure of that. If you continue to christen dying babies and spank living ones, you will soon make considerable stir in the neighborhood. Oh, yes," he continued, in answer to Burroughs's look of inquiry, "La Signorina has told me how you whip the babies when they scream and claw at you. She says the mothers say to their

children now, 'Be good, or I 'll call the doctor to lick you.' "

"I 'll get even with La Signorina for telling tales on me," laughed Burroughs; adding more seriously, "What a jewel that girl is! I could do almost nothing without her."

"The men from the school who have been down here have all fallen in love with her," said Raymond. "It is perfectly safe, for she is easily thirty years old and has a lover in Italy, it is said; a *grande signore*, who has sued long and vainly for her hand. But she loves her poor people better than a life of ease, and so she stays here."

"Long may she wave!" exclaimed Burroughs, fervently.

"That is what the board of managers say, only in less picturesque language. And speaking of them leads me to remark that I presume you have already discovered that a different member of the board is appointed as visitor each month. You will find that each one of these estimable ladies has a different theory which she expects you to put into practice. You will soon learn that each suggestion upsets those of the previous months. You will need to be reasonably independent. They will respect you more for it, as they know you can be trusted."

"Thanks for the suggestion. Now tell me about yourself. Is your practice going well? Are the fees coming in? Is your stock paying dividends?"

Raymond's personal affairs were always in good condition. It seemed as if the young man had been born under a particularly lucky star. He had large means, and upon graduation had entered an excellent practice under the patronage of an old physician about to retire. In addition to his other practice he had the charge of several well-paying, although uninteresting chronic cases, and did surgical work at the children's hospital. His home was with his adoring mother in pleasant uptown apartments.

His experiences were very different from those of his friend, for he was a good deal of a society man, and Burroughs always liked to hear about the fashionable functions in which Raymond took a prominent part, although he himself knew nothing of social gayety from personal experience.

"Our whist club is suspended for the summer," Raymond said, among other things. "The Farnsworth girls have gone to Boston to cultivate their minds for a few weeks before going to Bar Harbor, Jameson and Lamond are off on an automobile trip, and Margaret Worthington starts for Italy and Switzerland next week. It will be a little

dull for a while. But we shall go away ourselves the first of July."

He put his ear down to his guitar, twanged the G string, and tightened it up. He could not see the flush that spread over Burroughs's face.

"Margaret grows sweeter and daintier every day," went on Raymond, satisfied with the tuning of his string. "I tell you what, Burroughs, I'm half in love with that girl."

Burroughs's laugh was a little constrained.

"You are always in love with some one, Walter," he said. There was a weary note in his voice which Raymond did not detect.

"That's so, Phil. It's a chronic condition. I suppose this is only a transient fancy, but the man who wins Miss Worthington will get a jewel."

As he spoke, the dispensary bell jangled suddenly, and Burroughs went to the door. A little girl with a snuff-colored shawl over her head and her eyes big with excitement, exclaimed, —

"Is you the doctor? My mother says come quick! Our boarder's awful sick."

Burroughs stepped back into the office.

"It's too bad, but I've a sudden call. Take your time about going. That pamphlet you wanted is on my trunk in the 'back alley.' Just help yourself to it when you go, and put the lamp out."

As he spoke, Burroughs put on his hat, caught up his satchel, and joined the little girl at the door. Raymond placed his guitar leisurely in its case, took the lamp, and made his way through the waiting-room to what Burroughs had termed the "back alley." It was, in fact, a narrow room beyond the waiting-room, its floor two steps below the level of the other apartments. A sink with running water was here, a single window, and a door which led into the tiny back yard. Who had given the name to this room no one could tell. The title had been handed down from one interne to another like a college tradition. It was here that Burroughs slept, and as Raymond looked around the comfortless place, he exclaimed to himself, —

"That fellow has pluck! I don't believe I could stand this for two weeks. And this is the least of his troubles."

He found the pamphlet he was seeking, took the lamp back to the office, and then started off briskly for the regions of brownstone and American respectability.

CHAPTER III

A WRONG DIAGNOSIS

In the mean time Burroughs and the little girl had turned into the square. It was not more than ten o'clock, and as the evening was a warm one the place was alive with groups of chattering men and women. Nearly all the shawls flung over the heads of the women sheltered brown-eyed, wise-faced babies. It was not difficult for Burroughs to imagine where Raphael found the Holy Child, but the Madonna type was not so easy to discover, for the hard-worked Italian peasant girls look like old women before they attain their majority, and wrinkles destroy the beauty of many a pair of velvety brown eyes.

It was too early in the season for the sherbet peddler, but a push-cart of peanuts was the centre of a brisk trade and a hand-organ was animating the air with its sprightly trills and arpeggios. All about it laughing children, two by two, were waltzing and pirouetting in fascinating abandon. Other hand-organ players, tugging at the

handles of their instruments, waved good-natured greetings to their confrères, as they hurried homeward from reaping rich harvests in the uptown fields of financial plenty. Two women returning from the remote suburbs sat in state upon the front of their hand-organ and guided a meek pony which drew the machine. Before the parochial house of Santa Maria a woman with magenta headscarf, white blouse, and grass-green petticoat dispensed fortunes through the mediumship of two paroquets and a white mouse. Burroughs had once purchased one of these fortunes, but when La Signorina translated it and he found himself described as a married man with a doting family he lost faith in green birds and white mice.

The shops were open, their dingy windows making the usual display; here, long-stemmed pipes and packages of tobacco; there, macaroni in a great variety of forms and huge, ring-shaped loaves of bread; yonder, vegetables and condiments unfamiliar to American eyes.

Many of the shop-owners sat at ease upon step or sidewalk, enjoying the evening with the serenity of men at peace with themselves and their neighbors. There was Guiseppe Terminello, the grocer, with smiling face and ample paunch, dandling upon one knee his youngest offspring, while upon the

other was perched the babe of his eldest son. The *bambini*, who were about the same age and apparently greatly interested in one another, looked so much alike that Burroughs wondered whether the proud Guiseppe could really tell which was uncle and which was nephew.

There, too, was Pastorelli with the brigand mustache and nonchalant air, smoking his long pipe at the door of his fruit store. Just within, Burroughs could see his wife, a faded beauty, who was making red and green paper roses with which to decorate the shop. She conducted a little restaurant back of the fruit stands and sometimes Burroughs went in for a dish of macaroni or a cup of black coffee. Upon such occasions the wife of Pastorelli was in an ecstasy; she would stop at frequent intervals, while serving him, to pat him upon the shoulder and croon a delightful mixture of English and Italian in a remarkably sweet and liquid voice. She had a yellow dog of which she was very proud, which would insanely rush out of the shop every time a wagon passed, and chase it as far as the front of the church. Then he would trot back with lopping tongue, and Burroughs would squander five cents for peanuts to feed him, while his delighted mistress stood by smiling and exclaiming in her soft voice, "Yes-a, yes-a, nice-a

dorg-a; eat-a peanut-a, — nice-a Giorgio, — yes-a, yes-a."

The big church loomed above the square with huge twin towers, cross-surmounted. Burroughs had already come to like these towers. They dominated the district, standing with enduring calm above the picturesque sky line of tenements. Whether seen at sunrise, rosy on their eastern faces, blue on the west, at high noon in their glittering whiteness, or purpling against the flame of sunset sky, they were beautiful. To-night, as he passed close beneath them, he did not look up, but followed his guide down a narrow alley running at right angles to the square. He did not speak to the child, as he had nothing in particular to say, nor did she venture a word, for she was too much awed by her proximity to greatness to attempt conversation.

Halfway down the alley the child plunged in at a dark doorway and the student followed her. She took him by the coat sleeve and piloted him to the stairway. He ascended, taking careful steps in the darkness with his head well down. Just before he reached the first landing, something wet and cold touched him suddenly upon the face.

"Goodness! What's that?" he exclaimed, trying not to jump.

"Oh, don't be scairt," said the child, reassuringly; "it's only Carlotti's dog; he allers waits on the landin' till Carlotti comes home. Get out, yer dirty sheeny!" This last remark was addressed to the dog.

Burroughs stopped.

"See here," he said, "I've a candle in my pocket. Let's have a light."

He struck a match, applied it to the candle-wick, inspected the gaunt dog that had disconcerted him, and then plodded on by the light of his small torch.

"How many flights more?" he questioned, after three were passed.

"Only two," said the girl, apologetically. "My house is on the top floor. Are you tired so quick?"

"Not a bit," rejoined Burroughs, thanking heaven for his candle as he stepped around a wash tub and a clothes wringer which some one had considerately left on the stairway.

As a rule the progress of *il dottore* through a tenement house in the Italian quarter is accompanied by the phenomenon of curious faces thrust from every doorway along his route. Men and women stand on tiptoe to catch a glimpse of the great man; open-mouthed children block his way and stare without embarrassment. Burroughs

noticed that to-night the doors were all closed, the hallways deserted. This was due in part to the warmth of the evening, which invited sociability in the square, and in part to a reason which the young doctor learned later.

The kitchen on the sixth floor, into which Burroughs was at length ushered, was quite deserted. A smoky lamp gave a vague light revealing the typical condition of a slum kitchen. There was a clutter of dishes on the table; there were chairs without backs, and the shelf was loaded with pipes, holy water vases and paper roses. A pitcher stood in the middle of the floor and a gray cat drank therefrom, her head thrust well into its interior. A string, stretched diagonally across the room, sagged under its burden of dilapidated garments and old rags. Burroughs put down his head to pass beneath the clothes-line and followed his guide to the bedroom. As he approached, men and women, their eyes big with excitement, flocked from the smaller room. Burroughs counted them hastily. There were five men, seven women, and a baby in arms. Then he understood why the halls below were deserted. He heard a man's voice moaning, "Oh, my God! Let me die! Oh, my God! Oh, my God!"

The bedroom was just long enough for the iron

bedstead, beside which stood a little bureau, its warped drawers bulging with more old clothes. The remaining width of the room was taken up by a couch. This, too, was the length of the room. How twelve grown people had crowded in was a mystery. They had probably sat upon the large bed.

On the edge of the couch huddled a man. He wore no coat nor collar, and the muscles of his scrawny throat worked horribly as his shoulders heaved up and down in the effort to get breath. He repeated in gasps the words Burroughs had heard upon entering: "Oh, my God! Let me die!"

He spoke English perfectly and was evidently not an Italian. It flashed through Burroughs's mind that he might be a stranger in the city who had fallen into bad hands. He looked up wistfully into the interne's face.

"You are Doctor Burroughs?" he gasped.

"Yes."

"Thanks for coming. My name is Maxon. I am subject to these attacks. There's only one help. Hypodermic of morphine. Quick, for God's sake, before I die!"

This was said spasmodically and with great effort. Burroughs was in a quandary. It was the first case of the kind he had ever seen. The Ital-

ians, their eyes bulging, had crowded into the room again.

"Get out of here!" ordered Burroughs sharply, but as none of them understood English, nobody moved.

"Via!" exclaimed the little girl, shaking her fist, and they all dropped back into the kitchen.

Burroughs felt of the man's pulse. It was a blur of motion. He could scarcely distinguish the throbs. The sufferer's face was furrowed with pain and overspread by a horrid grayness. Perspiration trickled from his forehead and dropped upon the floor.

"Quick!" he gasped. "Have you no pity? Quick!"

Burroughs took a pastille from his satchel and demanded a plate. The girl spoke to her mother, who took a dirty one from the table, wiped it on her apron and passed it into the room. Burroughs lighted the pastille and held the plate close to the man's face, watching as the fumes wreathed upward. Again the terror-stricken eyes appeared in the doorway, and there was a murmur of surprise from the open mouths.

"Can't you keep those fools away?" demanded the student, angrily.

The child rattled off a string of Sicilian and

shook her fist once more. The heads disappeared. The gray-faced man gasped on. There was not the slightest suggestion of relief.

"Why can't you do as I say?" he moaned.

"Because," returned the interne, "if you send for me you must take my treatment. If you're not satisfied, you can send for another man."

He set down the plate with emphasis as he spoke and picked up his hat. So far as he could judge the man was suffering from an acute attack of asthma, and morphine stood out at the very end of a long line of alleviatives. It was a last resort and Burroughs abhorred it.

"Don't go," gasped the man. "I was rude. I sent for you because . . . because . . . Don't leave me. I don't want another doctor. I will do what you say, but I know; I know. Two grains will do at first. Don't let me die."

"Two grains! Good God, man! Do you want me to kill you?"

The man did not answer at once. He was caught by a sudden spasm of pain and clutched at his heart.

"These pains in my heart will kill me," he moaned.

The Italians in the next room were talking excitedly and the girl was called out.

"My father says you make the man well quick er he 'll fire yer both out," she announced upon her return.

"You tell your father he is n't the size," replied Burroughs, over his shoulder.

He broke a bead of amyl on a bit of cotton and held it to the man's nose. The fumes brought a flush to his own face, but they had no effect upon his patient. Instead, the rapid breathing gradually increased, the sunken eyes seemed starting from their sockets and the ashy face turned a dull purple. Burroughs was frightened, but he kept a bold front. If worst came to worst he would send for Doctor Lamberghini, on the Avenue. He decided that it would do no harm to try morphine, as the case looked extreme.

"I 'm awful sorry, but my father says he 'll fire yer pretty quick," whispered the girl at his elbow.

"Bring me a glass of water and a spoon," Burroughs said.

He dissolved a quarter-grain tablet of morphine and prepared his needle. The man looked at him gratefully and rolled up his shirt sleeve. The arm was marked with numberless tiny spots.

"What 's this?" asked Burroughs, pointing.

"Bites," gasped the sufferer; "this place is alive with vermin."

"Hold the lamp close," said Burroughs to his little attendant, "I 'm going to stick this needle in his arm. Don't look at me unless you 're sure it won't scare you."

"I ain't afraid."

"All right."

As Burroughs plunged the needle he beheld the bulging eyes at the doorway and uttered an exclamation of wrath.

"It don't do no good ter send 'em off," said the girl, setting down the lamp. "They 're crazy ter see the queer man, 'n' you 're the doctor, yer know."

"How long has this man boarded with you?" asked Burroughs, wiping his needle.

"'Bout a week. Paid down when he come, too."

"Has he acted like this before?"

"Nope."

"Where does he usually sleep?"

"In this here bed."

"And the rest of you?"

"In that there bed: my father, 'n' my mother, 'n' me 'n' my baby. I sleeps 'cross the foot."

"Oh, I see."

"Our other boarders sleeps on the floor in the kitchen when they 's here, but the padrone got

'em a job on the ackerduck, so they 's out there now."

"Yes, I understand."

Burroughs watched his patient closely, waiting for symptoms of relief. Thus he waited all night, repeating the doses of morphine at frequent intervals. The girl's father evidently thought better of his plan to throw physician and patient into the street, for shortly after midnight he entered the room, inspected the sufferer with nods and grunts, and throwing himself across the bed, fell into audible slumber. A little later the mother mixed some whiskey, milk, and tea, poured them into a bottle, waked up the baby, and gave it some supper. What was left she put in a cup and offered to Burroughs with smiling hospitality. Burroughs was neither hungry nor thirsty.

After four grains of morphine had been administered, the horrible gasping ceased, the patient's eyes drooped, and his head fell back on the pillow. Burroughs looked about him and found he was the only person awake, as the watchful Italians, who would not desert the scene of interest, lay on the kitchen floor asleep. Why he had not killed the man, Burroughs could not understand. He waited long enough to assure himself that all was going well, and then he awakened his little assist-

ant, who was asleep in a crumpled heap at his feet.

"I 'll come again in the afternoon," he said kindly, when she had roused enough to understand him. "You 'd better get into bed and have a long sleep. Thank you for your help."

She smiled sleepily and dropped back on the floor. Burroughs looked at her compassionately. Then he picked her up very gently and laid her on the bed beside her father, took off her dilapidated shoes, and spread a quilt over her.

"Poor little thing!" he thought, "what a life she leads!"

He tiptoed out between the recumbent Sicilians, accidentally hitting the clothes-line and nearly bringing it down on his head. Then he made his way back to St. Luke's through the chilly, echoing streets.

That morning at school he fell asleep during a lecture, and went up afterwards to apologize to his professor and to consult about the strange case he had attended. When he had given the symptoms and submitted his diagnosis, the physician began to laugh.

"My dear fellow, you 're far out of the way on that diagnosis. Quick pulse; rapid breathing; neuralgic pains about the heart. It was n't asthma.

That man is a morphine fiend. His money was probably exhausted and this acute attack followed his inability to get the drug. You must grasp situations and learn to recognize their bearing on the case in hand. Did n't you think it was strange for an American to be lodging in such a place?"

"Humph!" exclaimed Burroughs, in great disgust, "I did think it was a queer combination, but I never thought of the morphine habit. The gasping and particularly those pains around the heart threw me off the track."

"Doctor," he added, after a moment's uncomplimentary introspection, "how long does it take a man to learn what a fool he is?"

"Well, I will tell you in confidence," was the reply. "In our profession we find it out at least once in twenty-four hours every week of our lives."

CHAPTER IV

A READING FROM BYRON

THE grandfather of Luigi Monti hobbled up Spring Hill Street in the sunshine. He was a very old man who had fought in two wars for Italy's freedom. Now in his extreme age he dwelt in America with his grandchildren and lived daily in the memory of the stirring past. With high, quavering voice he was singing in his content; singing a song of the Garibaldi days and the red shirt of the patriots.

> " Quando a Millazo
> Passai sargente,
> Camicia rossa, camicia ardente —
> La man mi strinse
> Con forte scossa;
> Camicia cara, camicia rossa!"

A little old woman with a white handkerchief tied over her head peeped out of her window a few feet above the sidewalk and looked quizzically at the aged man with her shrewd and faded blue eyes.

"Hi, there!" she cried in a piping voice. "Hi,

there, yer little old man! D' yer want ter fight, yer bold, brave sojer? Ha! ha! ha!" and she shook her fist at him.

Old Monti stopped and made her an elaborate bow.

"Com' e vussia?" he asked politely in Neapolitan dialect.

"I s'pose yer sayin' 'Howdy do.' I 'm feelin' fine. How be you?"

"Bunariddu stamatina," quavered the little old man.

It was their daily form of greeting. Each understood the other imperfectly, but something drew them together and made them excellent friends, in spite of limitations. Perhaps it was the consciousness that they were the oldest people on Spring Hill Street. Burroughs came out of the dispensary next door.

"Now, Miss Cutter," he said with mock severity, "I 've caught you quarreling with Granddaddy Monti again. Let up on the old man, can't you? You 're altogether too fond of a scrap."

"Wal," retorted the old woman, tossing her head and taking the defensive at once, "is 't any wonder I scraps? Look heow them Eye-talians torments me all the time. 'T ain't no wonder I fights; hev ter, fer my rights."

"Yes," laughed Burroughs, "but don't you remember what the Good Book says, 'If thine enemy smite thee, turn to him the other cheek also.'"

Miss Cutter paused to consider for a single instant. Then she thrust her head out of the window and screamed to the retreating student.

"Wal, you 'd better look 'round in yer Bible 'tel yer find where it says, 'When yer live in Rome, yer sh'd dew as the Romans dew.' Ha! ha!"

Burroughs paused to hear the rest of the fun.

"Now, you doctor-feller," went on Miss Cutter, flattered by the student's attention, "you jest remember I 've lived on this here hill nigh on fifty years and o' late times I 've noticed folks doubles up their fists 'n' smites back when they 're hit. While I live in Rome I 'll dew as the Romans dew, I thank yer. Good-mornin', dar-tory, good-mornin'. Ha! ha! ha!" and she slammed down her window in triumph, leaving Burroughs laughing and old Monti greatly bewildered.

She was one of the few Americans whose attachment to Spring Hill had kept them in the district in spite of foreign invasion. Though nearly ninety years old she was still sprightly, with a sharp tongue, which was her pride, and an undying hostility to the majority of her neighbors. She owned the

two-story wooden house in which she lived, and her daily round of duties consisted in carrying out the details of her solitary housekeeping and in challenging all comers to wordy battles, from which she usually emerged triumphant.

A favorite grievance was that St. Luke's was not a charitable dispensary, but was carried on for the financial benefit of the board of managers. She had great faith in the interne and interpreter, however, probably due to the fact that the staff joked with her instead of taking her innuendoes seriously.

When Burroughs had gone down the hill in one direction and Grandfather Monti had started for his home at the other end of the street Miss Cutter opened her window once more, making considerable show of shaking a rug, but in reality waiting for the interpreter. She was soon rewarded.

"Hi, there, Lar Seenyer Reener!" she cried, as the nurse came from her lodgings; "when 's that there Lady-board goin' ter con-vene agen?"

"I not know, Miss Cutt'; not till goes the summer, I t'ink."

"And then they 'll be back here a-prancin' in 'n' out 'n' buildin' air castles. 'T 'ud be better, thinks I, if they 'd take some er their onholy gains 'n' buy the dar-tory a new pair er boots. But its air castles, air castles, air castles all the time."

La Signorina laughed, but made no reply. She was not fond of tilting with Miss Cutter, for the old woman's provincial English puzzled her and she knew the limits of her own vocabulary. At length she said good-naturedly, —

"I t'ink to go now, Miss Cutt'. I go to see poor baby," — adding with a sly twinkle, "you will go with me?"

"Will I go with yer? No, I thank yer. I have other fish ter fry, Miss Lar Seenyer Reener. I 'll bid yer a perlite good-mornin'."

Then it was quiet for a time on the old street. Brady and his henchmen lounged in the graveyard, Pastore's fat dog crossed the street and lay down in the sunshine, and the wife of Ricci, the mandolin teacher, thrust the ends of her Nottingham lace curtains out of her parlor windows preparatory to the Friday sweeping.

A faded man walked slowly up from the square. He started to enter the doorway of St. Luke's, but Miss Cutter's detaining words prevented him.

"The doctor ain't in. 'T ain't no use ter ring the bell. Want him fer anything special?"

"No," said Maxon, tremulously, "I simply came up to thank him for a favor he did me last night. I was very sick and he sat up with me nearly all night."

" 'S that so ? " said Miss Cutter, much interested. " Wal, I declare. An' yer able ter be up this mornin' ! Yer looks kinder peaked, though. Won't yer come in 'n' rest ? "

" No, I thank you ; I 'll come up again, I think. I suppose Doctor Burroughs will be in for his clinic this afternoon ? "

" Yes, same 's usual. But had n't yer better come in 'n' rest a little while ? Yer look real used up."

Maxon yielded. He felt very weak, for he had not breakfasted that morning, as he had no money, and the smell of Italian cooking was intolerable to him. Miss Cutter, moved more by curiosity than by hospitality, opened the door and ushered him into her little parlor. Then she trotted briskly to her kitchen, took the teapot off the back of the stove, and set it over the fire. As soon as the tea was hot she brought it in, with cup and saucer, sugar and milk.

" Now take a good drink. It 'll make yer feel more alive. Hev sugar 'n' cream, both ? Be yer an American ? I thought so. It 's good ter see an American in this God-forsaken place. This street used ter be most se-lect. But now it 's Eye-talians, Eye-talians, Eye-talians ! ! It 's no place fer Christians ter live."

Maxon drained the cup gratefully, and Miss Cutter refilled it, hoping every moment that her seedy guest would begin to talk.

"So you live round here?" she asked, as he set down his cup.

"Yes," said Maxon, hesitantly. "I am living here for the present. I have n't been here very long. I came here to be near Doctor Burroughs. Sometime, when I am feeling like myself, I will tell you why I am attached to Doctor Burroughs . . . but I am not equal to the task to-day. This is very good tea. May I trouble you for another cup?"

Miss Cutter tilted the teapot.

"Are you fond of poetry?" he asked, earnestly, when he had finished the draught.

"Wal, I can't say that I be. I ain't much given ter sent'ment 'n' such things."

"Do you know Byron?" asked Maxon, eagerly, pulling a dilapidated book from his pocket.

"No," replied Miss Cutter, primly, "I have n't the pleasure of his acquaintance."

"Then I shall have the privilege of introducing you to him," said Maxon, with wan gayety. "He was the greatest poet England ever produced. His works will live long after Tennyson and Browning are forgotten."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Miss Cutter, looking sphinxlike.

"Listen!" went on Maxon, running his finger up and down the pages in search of some particular passage. "This is from Childe Harold, a masterpiece," and he began to read with fervor.

At eleven o'clock he was reading still. At half-past twelve Miss Cutter carried out the empty teapot to replenish it, and when she returned she brought a plate of bread and crullers and shared her noonday meal with him. Then he picked up his shabby book and went on reading. Miss Cutter took up her knitting and worked industriously, nodding sympathetically to all the annotations. When Burroughs came home Maxon was too absorbed in poetry to notice when he passed the window. Miss Cutter saw him, however, and made an excuse to slip out and waylay him at the entrance of St. Luke's.

"Fer the love o' pity, come 'n' see what I 've got in my settin' room," she whispered, grasping the interne's arm and standing on tiptoe in the effort to reach his ear. "Here 's an American that looks more dead th'n alive 's ben a-settin' in my rocker sence nine forty-five this mornin'. Doin', what d' yer s'pose? A-readin' Cheeld Harold, if yer please,—poetry stuff, ter *me!*"

"What are you talking about?"

"Talkin' about a poor feller that come ter see you this mornin'. He looked kinder starved, 'n' so I called him in fer a cup er tea. Could n't have no American look that way in this region; an' he 's drunk three teapots full er tea an' eaten half a loaf er bread 'n' seven crullers, an' read his old Cheeld Harold till I had a mind ter throw him out o' the window."

By this time she was tugging at Burroughs's arm, and he followed her to her door. When he entered he saw the situation at a glance. At sight of the student, Maxon cringed.

"What are you doing here?" Burroughs asked, sternly.

"I . . . I . . . Oh, I fear I have encroached upon this lady's kindness. Is it really afternoon? I became so absorbed in this matchless poetry . . . Are you fond of Byron, Doctor? . . . Let me read you . . . or no; I see I have worn out my welcome. Good-by, my dear madam; good-by, and thanks for your hospitality."

He shook hands with a show of gallantry.

"Oh, it 's all right, mister," said Miss Cutter. "I was willin' ter give yer the tea, only don't read me no more o' that Cheeld Harold stuff."

Maxon took the rebuke with drooping head,

picked up his hat, and bowing to the interne, who, in most disconcerting silence, stood aside to let him pass, he sneaked out of the house. Burroughs followed him closely.

"Come with me a minute," he directed. "I have something to say to you."

Maxon meekly obeyed. Burroughs unlocked the dispensary door with deliberation, and pointed to the office without speaking.

"Sit down," he said, when both were within. He placed a chair for himself directly in front of the one Maxon had taken and looked sternly at him.

"You are to understand that I will not have you imposing on that old woman next door," he said. "I do not doubt that you found her strong tea excellent for the state of your nerves, but that makes no difference. Beside that, you need not think that you are imposing on me. I know exactly what ailed you last night. I have small respect for an opium fiend, but I might have more for you if you had admitted frankly that you craved morphine. As it is, I want you to understand that you need never send for me again nor come here for aid. There are places for men like you, but this is not one of them. If you wish to have me, I can get you committed to a retreat, but I have

neither the time nor the inclination to furnish you with free morphine. That is all."

Burroughs rose as he finished, and Maxon, who had not taken his eyes from the young man's face, rose also. His lip was trembling so that he could hardly speak, but he managed to gasp, —

"Don't send me off; don't! You are my only hope. Listen to me. I have traveled thousands of miles to tell you this. . . . There is a reason why I sent for you last night . . . a reason why I stay in this vile place. You have a claim on me, and I cannot pay my obligation. Look at me! Can you not remember having seen me before? . . . long ago? Is there nothing in my face that is familiar?"

"No," said Burroughs, quietly. He believed, now, that the man was insane.

"It was twenty years ago . . . Oh, my God! How much time I have wasted. . . . Let me see; I went first to Paris and afterwards to Rome . . . then to Algiers and Cairo. I was sick in Constantinople, and it was there I began to take morphine. . . . It will be cocaine and whiskey soon."

He drew himself up with an effort, and broke off abruptly. Then he bent a wild look on Burroughs and spoke suddenly, his voice rising to a shriek.

"Philip Burroughs! Won't you save me?

Won't you pull me out of this hell? If you knew! If you knew! My God! why can't I make you understand?"

"You must go now, Maxon," said Burroughs, kindly. He pressed the man gently but forcibly toward the door. "I can do nothing for you excepting in the way I have already told you. If you are out of money and are willing to work, there are places where you can get food and lodging in exchange for service. You need good food more than anything else, and work will give you an appetite. If you keep on with morphine, there is no hope for you."

Maxon had slunk into the craven once more.

"Good-by, doctor," he said, tremulously,—"good-by. You have been very kind. I will not trouble you again, nor the old lady next door. Good-by, doctor, good-by."

He crept out of the dispensary feebly and Burroughs began making preparations for his patients.

Presently Brady came down the graveyard steps, crossed the street, and tapped at the office window. Burroughs threw up the sash.

"Say," said Brady, with an air of mystery, "what d' yer make out o' that customer?"

"I did not need to prescribe for him," replied Burroughs, with professional reticence.

"Off his head, I say," went on Brady. "He was here day before yesterday, hangin' round ter see you. Said he use ter be in love with your sister and that she married somebody else and then died and he fell in love with you at her funeral. Then he went off travelin' fer years and has just come back — ter make love ter you, as fur as we could make out. Any truth in the story?"

Burroughs pondered for a moment.

"I never had a sister," he said at length.

Then he closed the window and went on with his work.

CHAPTER V

THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE

It was a beautiful day in June. The first tints of spring had ripened into the richer beauty of early summer and the sky was blue with that peculiar quality of warmth which comes in the year's first halcyon days. There were fleecy clouds rolling lazily across the blue; clouds that took odd shapes of mountains, birds, and beasts, as the clouds used to when we were children. Indeed, it was so fair a day that childhood and joy and all good things seemed very near and doubly real.

Young Salvatore Barone had a half holiday that day and he had brought Celestia Carmanti out to the great city park for a breath of fresh air and for something else. He wanted to tell her something which he could not well say in the stuffy parlor on Spring Hill Street, with her father and mother sitting by, even though those worthy souls understood scarcely a word of English. Barone and Celestia had come to the United States in childhood, had grown up in the public schools,

were proud to be Americans, and looked with patronizing pity on the old folks who knew no English and must depend upon their children for communication with the great Anglo-Saxon world.

"And you really love me?" Barone asked, in an ecstasy, when the fateful moment was triumphantly passed.

"Yes, I really love you."

"And have you loved me long, cara mia?"

"Stop! Do not talk Italian to me. I am an American."

"Forgive me, then, but tell me, have you loved me long?"

"Do you suppose I am going to answer that question?"

"Why not?"

"Why not? Because you would at once remember when you began to love me and if it should happen that I loved you before you cared for me, how ridiculous I should be in your eyes."

"Never, carissima, never. You could not possibly seem absurd."

"There you go with that silly talk! I am not my grandmother; you do not need to talk Genoese to me to make me understand."

They were sitting very close together, on the hillside which overlooks the free, rolling fields of

the park plaisance. The shepherd with his flock and never-resting dog were off in the green middle distance, but they might as well have been out of the picture so far as making any impression upon the lovers was concerned.

"Oh, you must not put your arm around me so soon!" exclaimed Celestia after a potent silence.

"Do you mind it, dearest?" asked Barone, without removing the offending member.

"Yes, I mind it very much. I shall be quite ashamed of myself when I get home and think it over. So soon! And we have been engaged — well, about fifteen minutes, I should think."

Salvatore placed his thumb and finger on her chin and turned her face gently toward his own.

"Look in my eyes, little girl," he said softly, "and tell me if you really mind it. Oh, you cannot speak: you cannot even look me in the eyes!"

Celestia gave a little sigh. It was not of resignation, surely, but of satisfaction, and again they sat silent, cheek to cheek, looking vaguely across the sunny fields, seeing without realizing it the graceful swing of the boughs of trees, hearing without knowing it the babble of a little brook near by, feeling upon their faces, though unconsciously, the sweep of the summer breeze.

"You have given me eight kisses in such a short

time," murmured Celestia, at length; "my lips are all red and sore, I know."

"Red, yes, always; and if sore, here is the beginning of the cure," and he kissed her again.

There was a speck of dust on Barone's coat and Celestia flecked it off with the careful pride of new possession. The wind blew his hair from his forehead and she stroked it into place, while Barone submitted to her care with a look of fond ecstasy which would have been ludicrous if it had not been so vital.

"What little hands you have, dear," Barone said.

Celestia laughed and tossed her head.

"Tell me how soft they are," she said; "that's the thing to say."

"'The thing to say,' you little minx! What do you mean by that?"

Celestia laughed again.

"That's the thing to say. Scarabini always says that."

"Scarabini!" muttered Barone, under his breath.

"Yes, Scarabini; but he will never say it to me again, dearest, nor hold my hand. These are Salvatore's hands now, and they are going to work for him some day."

Barone bowed his head above the little hands and kissed the soft open palms she held out to him.

"We will talk no more of Scarabini," went on Celestia, softly. "I shall never love him. I fear him too much. I do not like it because he works for that Spanish doctor and I think he deceives the poor people. I could not love a man who is unkind to the poor."

She was like an April day; laughing and saucy at one moment, gentle and tender almost to tears at the next. Did the Blessed Virgin ever bring better fortune than his to a poor Italian lad, Barone wondered.

As the afternoon waned, they drifted away from the hillside, walking hand in hand like children, through the sunlit fields and through groves of hemlock, by the rocky gorge where the brook danced in feathery cascades. And Barone, versed in wood lore from his boyhood's "country week" days, pointed out squirrel paths in the underbrush, found likely spots for ground pine, which Celestia plucked to take home to her mother, and pulled the fragrant flag from the quiet pools below the gorge.

So they fared on until sunset warned them back to the world of trolley cars and tenements, but they felt like beings from another sphere, since

love had given to them a new heaven and a new earth. They walked together through the narrow streets with the spell of love and summer strong upon them. The father of Celestia was smoking his pipe in front of the house and watching the antics of certain dirty-faced children with the air of patriarchal tolerance cultivated by long acquaintance with the rising generation of the district. As the young people approached, his sharp black eyes embraced the situation at a glance, and he nodded curtly to Salvatore, ordering Celestia to go into the house. The girl cast a frightened glance toward her lover and obeyed the word which had been law to her through the eighteen years of her simple life. When she had gone in, the old father beckoned to Salvatore by a gesture of the head.

"Where took you my daughter?" he asked, sternly, in Genoese.

"To the park," said Salvatore.

"Ah! to the park. And made you love to her?"

"Yes," replied the youth, meeting the old man's gaze with a steady eye; "yes, I made love to Celestia. She does me the great honor to love me. I ask permission of the good father to marry Celestia some time, when I have earned enough to make her happy."

The father uttered something between a growl and an imprecation.

"You will pay no suit to my daughter. I make great plans for Celestia. I spend much money to have her fine voice made beautiful. She shall be a great singer. Will I let a poor fellow like you make her forget the great plans? No. Will I marry her to a penniless nobody like Salvatore Barone? No. When the beautiful Celestia is married, it will be to a rich and great gentleman who can give her fine clothes, so that the people will like to hear her sing. You will come here no more. You will say no more the fine words; you will give no more the kiss. Go! The old Pietro is a man who keeps his word. If any more you try to make love to my daughter, it is the good Father Renaldo who will deal with the miserable Barone. Go!"

"But so much I love your daughter," pleaded Salvatore. "And so hard I will work for her. I go now to the night high school. Then I will go to the university and learn to be a lawyer. Then I will be a fine gentleman and will earn much money for the beautiful Celestia."

"Pah!" sneered the father, taking his pipe from between his thin lips; "you are but a boy. I have spoken."

Salvatore was Italian, and was therefore passionately earnest in his love, but he was American enough to realize the unwisdom of arousing an imperishable antagonism in the mind of the old Genoese. So it was policy rather than cowardice which led him to say with an almost servile politeness, —

"Well, signore, since you are determined, I will urge you no further. Believe me, I will no more disturb the lovely Celestia. I will crush my love. You are a kind father, and know best what is well for the daughter. It is not for the humble Barone to press his suit. I bid you farewell. Good-night."

He doffed his hat politely, cast one glance at the closed shutters of Celestia's room, and went down the street. His step seemed to have lost its elasticity; the street was very long and dark. He was conscious of a strange contraction in his throat, and did not know that it was a sob. He crossed the square in front of the church slowly, wondering how he should face the long, stupid days at the watchmaker's, and what he should do with the Sunday afternoons he had planned to pass with Celestia — those cosy hours in the little parlor on Spring Hill, and those jaunts to the great museums and libraries uptown. Barone was a progres-

sive youth, thoroughly imbued with the American spirit of culture, and eager to avail himself of every opportunity which should lift him out of the class from which he sprung. As he entered his boarding-house the noisy bell was ringing for six o'clock dinner. He followed the troup of good-natured Italian men into the ill ventilated dining-room, but for the first time in his life spaghetti was repulsive to him. There were freshly prepared peppers, too, spicily fragrant, but he could not eat them. He drank a glass or two of home-made wine and left the table, going at once to his room. He rolled a cigarette, and smoked with his chair tilted against the wall. There was an arc-lamp near by which made his room light. How dull and inconsequent everything seemed! There in the corner was the piece of coral he had bought from a sailor-man down at the wharves; yonder on the wall was a half-tone print of the murdered King Umberto, and beneath it the badge of mourning he had worn on the day when he marched with the Sons of Italy in the memorial parade. It was the glory of a bygone day. He cared no more for kings or badges or parades. And yet, Celestia had told him that she loved him. Could the cross father prevent her from loving him? Yes. If she heard no more from Barone, would not the old

man persuade her that her lover had changed his mind? Yes, surely. He must get word to her. But how? Who would be a trusty messenger, disinterested and silent? Ah! he had it — La Signorina at the dispensary on Spring Hill. She had helped to bring him through typhoid fever the winter before, doing much to cheer the long, colorless days of his convalescence in the lonely boarding-house. Barone put on an old slouch hat, turned up his coat collar, and took a circuitous route to St. Luke's, approaching from the farther end of the street in order to escape being seen by old Pietro Carmanti. And all the way his spirits were rising, for youth and love are invincible, and he embodied both.

Nothing delighted La Signorina more than a romance, and she was greatly pleased to be the confidante of the unfortunate Barone. She would not agree to be the bearer of messages between the lovers, but she smiled and looked very wise, and Barone felt sure he had won her for an ally. It was through her aid that he subsequently secured a good position in a city fifty miles distant, where he secured larger wages than in his former work. To be sure, he could not stand every night in the shadow of the graveyard wall and gaze at the unsympathetic brick front of his loved one's house,

but he felt that in another way he was drawing nearer to her than he had ever been before, since his now steadily increasing bank account showed him that, according to Pietro's standards, he was rapidly becoming a gentleman.

CHAPTER VI

THE SPANISH DOCTOR

The summer was one of extreme heat. The managers of St. Luke's allowed Burroughs two weeks' vacation, which he spent at Mrs. Raymond's summer home at the seaside. The first of August found him back at Spring Hill busy with the many cases which hot weather develops. He frequently saw the father of the little child whom he had wished to send to the hospital in the spring, but the man seemed anxious to avoid him, and he learned through another Italian that the little one had been taken to the Spanish doctor and that she was getting well.

Biaggio Carbone was working early and late, for the Spanish doctor's medicine was very expensive. Upon the initial visit the doctor had promised a complete cure, but he demanded fifty dollars as his fee in advance. Biaggio and his wife raised hands of dismay. Impossible! They had not so much money in the world, nor could they borrow the sum. By gradually reducing the

price, the doctor had at last agreed to take the case upon the immediate payment of five dollars, but since they could not give the full amount in advance, the ultimate price of the cure would be seventy-five dollars, to be paid before New Year's day.

He then gave Carbone a pint bottle of dark fluid, for which he demanded an extra dollar. The medicine lasted exactly one week, and a dollar was paid at each renewal of the prescription.

That was why Carbone was up before dawn those warm July mornings. In the dirty alley in front of the tenement where he lived, amidst heaps of ashes and decaying vegetables, he mixed and froze watery ice-cream, which he afterwards peddled through the streets of the Italian quarter. He had borrowed the freezer from the rich and kind Connetti, who let him have it without charge, for old friendship's sake. From Brigandi, the confectioner, he rented a small push-cart, painted bright blue, and decorated with strange bird forms, done in red. On this cart he daily loaded his freezer, carefully wrapped in a bit of red tablecloth. As he progressed through the streets, his approach was heralded by the stroke of a huge bell at the sound of which eager youngsters would rush from the houses whither they had gone to

importune for pennies, while grimy hands would hold out coppers, and dirty faces were bland with smiles. Biaggio would uncover the freezer, lift the lid of a little partition at the back of the cart, and take out a square of newspaper. With his long iron spoon he would place a dab of ice cream upon the improvised plate and hand it to the waiting child, serving each in turn. This little ceremony being concluded, the freezer would be covered, and the monotonous note of the bell would mark the progress toward another region of probable buyers. What he did was done very earnestly, for every penny which jingled into his box meant new health for his "Pearl of Italy," his little Rosa.

The family lived on very humble fare during those anxious days. Even the supply of spaghetti was limited and garlic became a luxury. The home-made wine was fortunately not yet exhausted and they managed to keep alive. For a time these efforts and self-denials were rewarded. Rosa seemed better; she sat up in bed by the hour, quite free from pain, and amused herself with a bit of wire and three buttons, which were her only toys. But as the summer waxed into the wasting heat of dog-days, cries of baby anguish increased the horror of the stifling nights, and the weary

mornings would find Carbone and his wife, pale and anxious, hurrying to the Spanish doctor with their little moaning burden.

Then from necessity the food supply fell off still more, and the older children whined and snarled about the alley like hungry wild animals and ate refuse from the barrels behind the corner market.

One morning Carbone's wife went to the City Hall and secured a temporary license to finish trousers, and day after day early risers would see her returning from the Jewish quarter with a huge armful of trousers bulging beneath her snuff-colored shawl. It was slow work; the facings must be so carefully adjusted, there were so many buttons to sew on and each one with such precision that it seemed to her as if she would never learn to work swiftly. But love was back of her efforts, and by industrious labor she was at length able to finish eight pairs in a day. At eight cents a pair she could save a good sum toward the payment of the doctor's bill due at New Year's.

"Ah, my dearest!" she would say a dozen times a day, laying down her needle to kiss and clasp the little body she was toiling so hard to save, "thou art mother's little dove, her little pearl. Sweet! I pray the blessed mother of God will spare your life to me."

Much more she would say, but why translate the words? Mother-talk is much alike in all languages and in all dialects.

Just as the woman had become really skillful with her work, the inspector came, and when he found her sewing in a bedroom with a sick child in the bed and other dirty youngsters playing near her work, he took away her license. From the view-point of the higher civilization, this was unquestionably the right thing to do, but to the mother, in her ignorance of law and cleanliness, and with the great burden in her heart, it seemed cruelly despotic.

One day, long to be remembered for its intolerable heat, Rosa went into convulsions. Carbone hurried to the doctor. The Spaniard was a little, skinny man with sandy hair and a patch of beard upon either cheek. His cunning, red-rimmed eyes peered sharply through the spectacles which bridged his hooked nose. His lean hands were never quiet; they seemed grasping, grasping. The student had guessed his race correctly.

"Pring der childt to me," he said, and Scarabini translated. Biaggio explained that he dared not move Rosa from the bed. The Spanish doctor shrugged his shoulders.

"Money," he said, laconically.

Biaggio turned his pockets inside out. He had only twenty-three cents.

"Get out!" sneered the doctor. "Don'd dry no dricks on me. You Dagoes all have money hid in your sdockins or your coad-dails!"

By way of translation, Scarabini pointed to the door. This was language which Carbone understood. Almost mad with grief, he fell at the doctor's feet and begged in the name of all the saints in the calendar that the good doctor would come to his little Rosa. The assistant took him by the collar and pushed him out of doors. When he found himself thrust into the street he cast a look of hatred at the office of the Spanish doctor. It was the look that denotes a form of slow rage which often leads to the quick plunge of a knife in an unsuspecting back. Then the look of agony returned as he thought of his "Pearl of Italy." In an instant he remembered the doctor at St. Luke's. Could he hope, with his poor English, to make *il signore dottore* understand his great need? He would try. Would he be forgiven for disregarding instructions and going elsewhere for help? He hoped so. The Americans are very merciful.

The house was a house of mourning. The alley in front of it was crowded with wildly gesticulating

Italians, the hallways were swarming with weeping women and children. When trouble comes in Little Italy, the neighborhood shares the excitement.

In the airless little room where Rosa lay, her brothers and sisters were sobbing aloud and a dozen neighbor women were wringing their hands. Only the mother was silent; she sat beside the bed, blood trickled down her cheeks, and at every convulsion of the sufferer, she rocked to and fro and dug her finger-nails again and again into her lacerated face. When Burroughs entered with Carbone he was reminded of an oldtime story learned in childhood, and he put the mourners out of the room and shut the door upon them. Only the parents saw the gentle, skillful touch with which he worked over the dying child. Carbone was very calm, but the mother still swayed to and fro unmindful of her bleeding face, her eyes riveted upon her darling. At length Burroughs motioned the father to be seated, saying quietly, —

"It will be over in a few moments."

Though he understood but little English, Carbone guessed the student's meaning, and, taking a crucifix from the head of the bed, he laid it gently on the baby's pillow and dropped upon his knees by his wife's side.

Burroughs stood with his finger on the tiny wrist

where the pulse fluttered faintly. He could feel the hot steaming air, laden with the odors of a dozen Italian dinners, wafted in at the window in regular waves. The sleepy buzz of flies grated upon his ears; the sight of them as they settled upon the white face sickened him, and with his free hand he constantly drove them away. On the wall opposite hung a deep, glass-inclosed frame containing the plate and handles of a baby's casket. In a few days, he knew, little Rosa's would hang beside them.

Little by little the paroxysms grew less frequent. Little by little the rigid shadows settled upon the drawn face. It was the moment of pause before the final struggle. Burroughs stood alert, his finger on the pulse.

Suddenly the door was opened with a bang, the Italian interpreter entered, briskly professional, while lurking in the shadow was the Spanish doctor. The chattering group in the hall crowded to the doorway, but fortunately, were awed into silence.

"You here!" sneered Scarabini, as he saw who was standing beside the bed.

Burroughs's face flamed scarlet, but he did not take his finger from the expiring pulse. With his free hand he pointed to the child.

"Keed dead?" asked the Spanish doctor in his greasy voice.

"Not dead," replied Burroughs, striving to restrain himself, "but nearly so, thanks to you. Have you decided to take the case again?"

The Spanish doctor grinned. He slipped behind his deputy, however, for he saw a dangerous gleam in the eye of the young American before him.

"I thoughd I vould come and take avay mein medicine," he said, softly.

"Take it, and be hanged to you!" exclaimed Burroughs, wrathfully; "take it and go. But hear what I say to you. As sure as there is a God, you 'll hear from this. You shall not go around defrauding these poor people out of their money and their lives. If there is justice in this city for such as you, I 'll raise heaven and earth to bring you to it. Get out of here before I put you out! Go!"

Scarabini went over to the table and seized the pint bottle from a heap of dirty dishes. The Spanish doctor sidled toward the door. He was smirking still.

"Prut-te-tut-tut," he said, with a taunting gesture. "Vat vill you do, young man? You are a keed. You know noddings. I have license to

bragdice; you haf nod. My medicine is nod poison. The law brodegs me. You can do noddings. I vill pid you good-day."

He bowed mockingly and backed out of the room, Scarabini following, while Burroughs stood trembling with helpless rage. He knew that the Spanish doctor had the advantage over him, and that neither he nor Carbone could hope for redress.

Then what they were waiting for came. The baby voice rang in a sharp cry; the tiny hands clutched and tore the black hair; the little wasted body heaved thrice in an awful convulsion. And all the father's days of toil had gone for naught and all the mother's prayers had been in vain. For the spirit had torn itself free from its prison forever.

Then the watchers in room and hall and street heard a dreadful shriek, as the mother-heart broke and an unconscious form fell across the little dead body.

CHAPTER VII

RENUNCIATION

There was very little that was consecutive about life and work at St. Luke's. Each day brought new episodes and when one was closed another equally absorbing took its place and crowded out what had gone before. Sometimes in his rare moments of leisure, Burroughs, becoming reminiscent, would recall this or that unique experience through which he had passed. Without his realization these episodes were moulding themselves into the impetus which led him to take up with a growing devotion the cause of the poor Italian people. That they were dirty, that many of them were tricky almost beyond belief, Burroughs knew well; but as he studied the conditions of their lives, he wondered that they were no more depraved than he found them, while, on the other hand, their appreciation of kindness and devotion to those who befriended them, made much of Burroughs's work a pleasure.

The episode of the Spanish doctor was kept

fresh in the interne's mind by frequent encounters with Scarabini and the familiar sight of the "Spaniard's" huge bottles of medicine in the houses to which he was called. He never consented to take a case unless assured that Scarabini's employer had abandoned it, and he realized that no open attack upon the impostor would be successful, nor would any underhanded methods of defaming Scarabini be honorable. But the gradual downfall of the Spanish doctor and his henchman came by most natural processes. Burroughs's kindness to Carbone's child and the rude words and insulting manners of the other men had made a deep and ineffaceable impression upon the awe-stricken crowd that witnessed little Rosa's death.

The fame of the American doctor spread abroad in the Spring Hill district, and before cold weather began Burroughs's practice had nearly doubled and the Spanish doctor felt a falling off in trade.

Biaggio Carbone came up to St. Luke's one evening with a thank-offering for *il dottore.* Burroughs admitted him, only to be astonished by the sight of a plump rooster which Biaggio deposited in the middle of the office floor, informing the interne in broken English and with much pantomime that the fowl was a gift. The rooster was much more at ease than was Burroughs, and was soon

strutting to and fro and uttering an occasional "c-rr c-rr" of perfect satisfaction. Burroughs was deeply touched by this token of regard, which must have cost the poor Italian many hours of toil, but he did not know what he should do with it. Later he settled the matter by presenting the bird to his boarding-house mistress, who fricasseed it for dinner the following Sunday.

Biaggio stood and looked wistfully into the young man's face as if he longed to give some better expression of the gratitude he felt for the student's kindness to little Rosa.

"Much-a t'ank, much-a t'ank," he said again and again, patting Burroughs softly upon the shoulder.

"How is your wife?" Burroughs asked, but Carbone could not understand. Burroughs learned afterwards that she sat all day like one in a dream, unmindful of what was going on around her.

Biaggio pointed once more to the rooster, who was cocking his bright eyes at the lamp-light, repeated again the words "much-a t'ank," and went out into the street, followed by Burroughs's hearty "Good luck to you."

The bright fall days brought a pleasant change to the old hill. There was a spirit of renewed activity in the air; men stepped briskly to their

work in the early frosty mornings; women spent less time gossiping on the curbstones and the children, barefoot no longer, rushed off to school with an energy born of clean faces and best clothes. Window blinds were left open now, to admit the sunshine, and bunches of red and green peppers hung from the shutters, while pans of crushed tomatoes on the window ledges added a touch of color to the dingy neighborhood. The wind from the bay blew salt and cool and an odor of grapes was in the air, for it was wine-making time. Piles of grape-seeds lying in the gutters awaited the nightly round of the street cleaners, and showed that in even the humblest homes the grape-treaders had been at work.

The medical school opened the last week in September and a few days later Margaret Worthington returned from her European trip. No one outside her immediate family circle knew of the attachment between Miss Worthington and the interne at St. Luke's. It had begun in a youthful friendship of high school days when Margaret, the most popular girl in her class, had befriended the sensitive boy who helped the janitor out of school hours. She had incidentally learned his story; a not uncommon one, but it had touched her young imagination. Burroughs's father was a man of

large property, whose sudden death had left an invalid wife and a boy of ten years, at the mercy of unscrupulous lawyers. In a few months, the widow found herself in almost abject poverty and the boy began to work before he was through the grammar school. By the time the high school course was finished, a firm friendship existed between Margaret and Burroughs. The young man's mind was made up to a professional life and his interests led him to the study of medicine. His only source of revenue lay in himself and there was no honest work to which he was unwilling to turn his attention. The summers during his high school course had been spent in serving as bell-boy at a fashionable seashore hotel. During the vacation following his freshman year in the medical school he had taken agencies for books and photographs, journeying through up-county districts with great success. During the school year he waited on tables in a restaurant in rush hours and tutored the backward son of a rich man in Latin and mathematics. Fortunately for him, in his junior year he was assigned a scholarship, and through Raymond's kindness was appointed interne at St. Luke's. Thus for the first time since childhood, he was comparatively free from financial anxiety.

As Margaret grew older and came in touch with

the young people of the fashionable circle in which she moved, she found herself testing every man she met by her quiet, self-effacing, earnest friend. He was different from others, she discerned, and before she realized it, he had become her ideal and the standard which she set for young manhood. On Burroughs's part, she grew more and more the goal of his ambitions. To him there was always peace where she was, and after the death of his mother, she became his all. There was very little love-making between the two. Their courtship was not a transport of demonstrations, but rather a steady growth of mutual confidence, a dream of ultimate oneness.

The evening following Margaret's return from Europe, Burroughs dressed himself with care and went uptown to call upon her. He spent an hour of delight looking at photographs and souvenirs, listening to her voice and watching the light and shadow play upon her hair as she sat in the lamp-light. She had brought him a tinted photograph of the Bay of Naples, daintily framed, having selected it as particularly appropriate in view of Burroughs's work among the Italians. He was naturally delighted with it. The evening was one of the happiest they had ever spent together, and when they parted Burroughs held her in close em-

brace and told her, as he had often told her before, that he had no right to let her waste her youth waiting for him, but that if she would be patient he would surely win his way, through her inspiration and for her sake. And she told him, as she had done many times, that she loved him better every day, and that the time she spent waiting for him could not be wasted, though she waited a thousand years.

The next day Burroughs was summoned to Mr. Worthington's counting-room. His mind was surging with hopes and questions, but his face was very calm when he was ushered into the private office.

"I have sent for you this afternoon, Mr. Burroughs," the merchant said, in the rapid, incisive tones of a busy man, "to speak to you about your attentions to Miss Worthington."

Burroughs bowed.

"I do not wish to be misunderstood. I am neither proud nor prejudiced. I honor the men who fight for places in the world. "But" — he hesitated as if a little disconcerted by Burroughs's level gaze — "you cannot marry my daughter."

Burroughs did not speak.

"You are a perfectly respectable young man," went on the father, "and Mrs. Worthington assures me that your relations with our daughter

have been candid and beyond reproach. But you are poor and are likely to be so for some time to come. It is all very well to talk about waiting, and love in a cottage; but that is better in literature than in life. I did not realize how serious matters had become until I had a talk with my daughter last evening after your call. Then I saw it was best to act at once. I will admit that it was only after extreme protest that she relinquished the keepsakes which you have given her at different times. Here they are. Now if you will kindly agree to return any trifles she may have given you and will promise me to have nothing more to do with her, I will not detain you longer."

As Mr. Worthington proceeded, Burroughs, who had remained standing, grew very white. He clutched the back of a chair to steady himself, and as the older man paused, he tried to reply, but something caught in his throat. In a moment, however, he regained his poise sufficiently to say, —

"Did Miss Worthington know that you were going to say this to me?"

"She did."

"Then she will not misunderstand my silence?"

"She will not."

There was a pause. Burroughs's throat and tongue were parched, his lips dry and bloodless.

"Do you mean to say that my honest affection for your daughter is to be set aside simply because I am poor?"

Mr. Worthington looked a bit uncomfortable.

"I mean to say," he replied, "that boy and girl love is not necessarily eternal. Scatter the fire on the hearth and it dies out."

"Is your decision final?" asked the young man after a pause.

"It is."

"Then I give you my word of honor that I will follow your instructions implicitly."

"Thank you."

"But," added Burroughs, with spirit, "there is no one in the world who can prevent me from caring for your daughter. I have loved her too long for that and I will love her to the end of my life."

"I will not detain you longer," said Mr. Worthington, turning to his desk.

Burroughs stopped at the door. His voice was broken, now.

"I will return her gifts by mail to-night," he said, "excepting — May I keep her photograph?"

"You may not," replied Mr. Worthington, not looking up.

"Good-day, sir."

"Good-day."

Burroughs wondered why he felt so calm as he walked back to St. Luke's. Except for a kind of light-headedness, he would never have known from his feelings that anything had hurt him. He forgot that the shock of the knife plunge temporarily benumbs the flesh. Unfortunately for his mood, he had invited Raymond to have a macaroni supper with him that night at Pastorelli's. Burroughs was a very frank fellow, not given to dissembling, and the task of covering his feelings with a show of gayety grew momentarily more formidable as the dinner hour approached.

Of course Raymond was in a particularly sunny frame of mind. Looking back upon the evening, Burroughs viewed it as a dream in which he himself had taken a part of hysterical gayety. Pastorelli's wife sat behind the candy counter when they entered, and one of the six scions of the house presided over the fruit bench. Giorgio, the yellow dog, hovered near the peanut roaster. The woman came forward smiling, seized Burroughs's hand and kissed it. Raymond was not prepared for this, and had great difficulty in restraining his mirth. The boy among the bananas grinned shyly.

"Hello!" exclaimed Burroughs, "how is my friend Pasquale this evening?" The boy looked sheepish and stuck his fingers into his mouth.

"He is her favorite child and she's always pleased that I remember his name," Burroughs explained. "She does not know that the only reason I can distinguish him from his brothers is because he is cross-eyed."

Burroughs led the way to one of the marble-topped tables behind the screen that shut off the fruit benches. Pastorelli's wife brought two bottles of ginger ale from the small tank of ice water in the corner, and with this innocent liquid the two men refreshed themselves while the principal dish of the repast was being prepared. Giorgio attached himself to them early in the proceedings, but finding that peanuts were not forthcoming, he sought the street and his favorite sport of chasing wagons across the square.

One corner of the shop was shut off by a flimsy board partition, and here the wife of Pastorelli prepared the viands which were cooked to order for her patrons. There was a small aperture cut through this partition, with a shelf adjusted beneath it, the latter being neatly covered with a red oil-cloth. It was through this opening that food was supposed to be handed to the waiter, but as that functionary did not exist, and as the black and yellow cat usually sat on the shelf, the effect of this modern convenience was somewhat destroyed.

In her small cook room, Pastorelli's wife rolled out a lump of dough to a thin sheet, cut it into long, narrow strips, and put it into the kettle of boiling water which stood on her oil stove. Then she brought a bottle of tomato sauce, and when the macaroni was sufficiently boiled, she drained off the water, added dried parsley leaves, and poured the sauce over all. Then she heaped two soup-plates and set them before Burroughs and his guest with a smile of self-satisfaction, for she was very proud of her home-made macaroni. Raymond had considerable difficulty in manipulating the long pieces, which persistently slipped away before he could convey his fork from plate to mouth. Burroughs, who would not allow him to cut the strips, amused himself by laughing at his friend's efforts, while Pastorelli's wife sat afar off, smiling and crooning, "Yes-a, yes-a, nice-a," till other customers absorbed her attention. When the macaroni dishes were empty, a salad was served, with a dressing of good olive oil and grape vinegar. This was easier to eat, and conversation might have flowed more freely but for the fact that both men grew preoccupied as time went by. At length, when conversation reached an absolute standstill, Raymond exclaimed, —

"How talkative we are!"

"I am tired to-night, Walter. You must forgive me for keeping quiet. But why are you so still? You like to talk — you know you do — and I like to hear you. So go on, I beg of you."

Raymond smiled with a far-away look in his eyes.

"I may as well tell you, Phil, just what is the matter with me. I 'm trying to screw up my courage to propose to the prettiest, daintiest little girl in the world."

"You do not need to do a great deal of 'screwing' for that, do you, Walter? I 'm inclined to think that almost any girl of your acquaintance would be glad to marry you."

"Don't flatter me, Phil," answered Raymond, earnestly. "I know just about what I 'm worth and it 's very little. Perhaps time will develop the original; I certainly hope so. But, you see, the trouble with me in the past has been that I have not dared to get well enough acquainted with a girl to decide whether or not I want her for keeps."

"That is a great excuse for you to make!"

"Well, it is true, at any rate. I tell you what it is, Phil, I 'm afraid of the young girls; they are always misunderstanding a fellow."

He shivered a little as if at an embarrassing reminiscence.

"For example: one time I begged a girl to sing 'O, Promise Me,' and the next thing I knew her brother was trying to find out when I intended to ask papa!"

"It served you right. You had probably been looking unutterable things at her with those fetching brown eyes of yours."

"No, indeed, I was just ordinarily civil. But since then I 've been very shy. I don't hesitate to make love to La Signorina and some of those older girls — they don't misunderstand; but when it comes to my contemporaries, I have thought it safer to be a gay butterfly, flitting from flower to flower."

"Yes; and breaking a heart at every flit! I know you."

"I do not believe that. There 's nothing heartbreaking about me."

"Yes, there is."

"Well, never mind that part of the story; let me go on. At last I have settled upon some one. Shall I tell you who it is? Let me see . . . no; I 'll wait and tell you later if my suit is successful. She is a dear, sweet, womanly girl, and I know you will be pleased at the match."

"I shall be very glad to see you happy, Walter," Burroughs answered, bravely. He made a heroic

mental attempt to be unselfishly pleased at his friend's joy, but it was a desperate effort. He fancied he knew the young woman — a pretty society girl of whom Raymond had talked a good deal of late; a girl largely endowed with talents and with wealth.

"I will take it for granted that you will be successful," he continued, "and will congratulate you now from the depths of my heart. Here is my hand on it."

As they clasped hands across Pastorelli's marble-topped table, they did not dream that there was anything tragic in the act. Months afterward the memory of that friendly grasp came back to Raymond with startling force.

Burroughs settled the bill with Pastorelli's smiling wife, and Raymond fed peanuts to the grateful Giorgio. Then the two friends went out on the square and parted at the corner.

Burroughs for the time abandoned himself to his grief. The knowledge of Raymond's prospective happiness accentuated his pain. He went to his room and gathered together Margaret's little gifts, pressing each one to his lips as if it were a holy relic. Beads of perspiration stood on his forehead, but his eyes were dry and his hand was steady. But when he took her picture out of its case, his

fortitude gave way, he buried his face in his hands, and sobbed as only a strong man can sob when mastered by grief.

At about the same time, Raymond, entering his office, opened a compartment in his desk and took out a photograph. He laid it upon the desk and bent over it, a smile of happiness breaking through the earnest look on his face.

"Little girl," he said within himself, communing thus with the face in the frame, — "little girl, will you love me all the days of your life? I am saying good-night to you, dearest; good-night, and God bless you. Oh, if I were only worthy of you!"

He lifted the picture and laid his cheek upon it with the tender reverence with which he would have folded its prototype to his heart. Then he laid it back in its place, and "Margaret, darling!" he whispered, softly.

From that day forward Burroughs plunged into his work with hysterical energy. The hope that dies hard flickered in his breast, but the future was a blank. His parents had named him Philip Melancthon, and some of the sturdy reformer's devotion to conviction seemed reincarnated in his heart. But the path he walked with outward calm was the Way of the Cross to him; his step

lost its buoyancy; stern lines settled at the corners of his mouth, and the boy-look died out of his eyes.

Yet sometimes as he bent over the beds of the dying, he seemed to feel Margaret's breath upon his cheek; to hear her words in his ear, "My love for you grows stronger every day. I will wait for you, though I wait a thousand years."

CHAPTER VIII

A WRECKED LIFE

FROM the north transept of the church a broad thoroughfare runs down to the water front, and the inhabitants of this avenue and its adjacent streets are of a different type from the dwellers on Spring Hill. It is as if a ship's prow had run inland, furrowing a triangular space with its apex at Santa Maria and its base at the wharves. All this imaginary track of a ship is tinged with the sea. Chandlers' shops display ropes, anchors, and tarpaulins; sailors' boarding-houses, conducted by rosy-cheeked Swedish women, contrast sharply with sailors' dance-halls, kept by reprobate Americans, and the rolling gait and sea songs of sailors from many ports give a distinctive atmosphere to the locality. It is this wedge-shaped section which separates the Italian and the Jewish quarters.

Burroughs had seen nothing of John Maxon for several weeks. He was told by Brady, that purveyor of local news, that the unfortunate man was still in the vicinity, and Burroughs often wondered

if it was not his duty to have Maxon consigned to a retreat. The student had learned, however, from years of rubbing against life's sharp corners, that it is seldom wise to interfere in matters outside one's province.

On Saturday nights Pacific Avenue is full of sailors, and venders of all sorts reap a rich harvest. Here are sober-faced Jews with bearded chins, and derby hats crowded down to the tops of their ears. Wooden trays are hung from their necks, displaying a tempting collection of collar buttons, fringed with shoestrings, suspenders, and handkerchiefs. Here, too, is the ubiquitous Italian peanut vender with upturned coat-collar and slouch hat, a wire netting protecting his wares from the depredations of small boys. A little further down the street, another Italian is popping corn in a glass-protected hand-cart by the flames of an oil-lamp; yonder is a song-sheet seller, a fruit stand, and a blind singer playing upon an accordion and singing sentimental ballads at the top of his voice. The shops along the avenue are brilliantly lighted, and down near the water front hand-organ players grind out their lively tunes for a certain stipend per hour in front of the bright saloons and within the alluring dance-halls.

One Saturday evening, as Burroughs jostled his

way through the crowds on the avenue, he saw some men gathered about a street vender, and heard a voice announcing the merits of the goods displayed. There was something familiar about the voice, and Burroughs pushed his way into the crowd until he could see the man in the centre. It was Maxon. He had a small portable table covered with wire baskets, mats, and lamp-shades.

"See, gentlemen!" he was exclaiming as Burroughs crowded in; "I hold in my hand the greatest wonder of the age. From these ingeniously commingled rings I will produce a succession of useful and indispensable articles. Watch me carefully. First we have a mat seven inches in diameter. What kind of a mat is it, gentlemen? A flimsy cotton mat? No. A rough bamboo mat of Japanese construction? No. A mat embroidered with dirt-catching butterflies and flowerets? No. The mat which I hold in my hand is a firm, neatly made mat. The best quality of wire has been employed in its construction. It is clean, and will not catch the dust. You could set Washington monument on it and it would not break. You could set Mount Vesuvius on it and the tablecloth underneath would n't be so much as scorched. What a boon to the housekeeper! You married men back there, keep your eye on this wonderful

mat. Just the thing to set the teapot on. As the poet says, 'What is home without a teapot.' Now, gentlemen, watch me carefully."

He made a sort of pass over the wire mat, with that appearance of deftness peculiar to the demonstrators of certain lines of goods. In an instant he held up a work-basket for the interested inspection of his audience, and went on to describe its convenience in flowery language. Next it was a fruit dish, then a skeleton lamp chimney, and last of all the frame for a lamp-shade.

"Now, gentlemen, how many of these useful and elegant articles will you have? They are invaluable to any home, so simple in their construction that a child can work them. Boys, think of your dear old mothers! How their eyes would be gladdened by the sight of one of these gems of usefulness. 'A boy's best friend is his mother,' as the song says. Ah! how true it is. Only ten cents each, gentlemen. You will take one? Thank you. Yes, it is perfectly simple. Any child of ten can work it. This way first; then so; and so. That is it. You will have two? Thanks. I knew by your faces, gentlemen, that you know a good thing when you see it. Thank you; thank you."

"I will take one," said Burroughs, quietly, as he pushed his way to the front and laid a dime on the

table. Maxon's jaw dropped, and the jauntiness went out of his manner.

"Thank you, doctor, thank you. You are very kind," he murmured, adding in a whisper, "but don't feel obliged to take one. They are not of the least use."

"I know that," replied Burroughs, "but I want one for a souvenir."

Maxon took a fresh one from the dilapidated satchel at his feet. Then he put up his samples and folded his table. The group of men melted away, leaving Burroughs and Maxon alone.

"I am glad you are at work," the interne said.

"Yes, I suppose it is a good thing," replied Maxon, dejectedly. "It keeps me from lodging at the police station or roosting among the rubbish on the wharves. Last week I served beers at Smith's dance hall, but — it was too much. I am pretty low down on the ladder, but there are depths to which I have n't sunk yet. I could n't be a party to Smith's business."

"Good for you!" replied Burroughs, heartily.

"I am glad you were willing to speak to me, doctor," Maxon went on, plaintively. "I have thought of you very often. Sometimes at night when I can't sleep in the lodging house, I walk up to your place and think about you. I have n't told

you yet why I am so attached to you. I will some day. I know you loathe me; I do not wonder at it and I do not mind."

"I do not loathe you," said Burroughs, earnestly; "I only loathe a horrible habit. I wish you could break away from it and be a man. I am sure you were born to better things than this," indicating the wire baskets and Pacific Avenue in one sweeping gesture.

"You are very kind," repeated Maxon. "Yes, it is true that I was born in a better grade of society than this. But it is too late. I lost my grip long ago. Good-by, good-by. I shall have to move on now. We are allowed to remain only twenty minutes in one place. Good-by, and don't think too hard of me."

The next evening Burroughs went down to the rescue mission on Pacific Avenue. He had a sick patient who chanced to be a Protestant and wanted to see a minister. The regular Sunday evening service was in progress when he entered and the room was well filled. The majority of the men were obviously indifferent to the speaker, but here and there one and another listened with eager wistfulness. Three old topers who were converted annually when cold weather set in were on the front seat. Just back of them was a huge Irish

sailor comfortably drunk. He insisted upon interrupting the missionary's remarks with excerpts from comic songs.

"You must be quiet, my friend," said the speaker, kindly. "If you are so noisy I shall have to put you out."

The huge man's dull wits were slow in grasping these words, but when at last they had penetrated his muddled brain, he rose with tipsy dignity and stepped into the aisle.

"You put me out!" the giant sneered, as he slowly surveyed the missionary's five feet six inches, "you put me out! I 'd like ter see yer try!"

"But, my friend," urges the speaker, forgetting how foolish it is to argue with an intoxicated man, "you would not disturb this service, would you? When there are never-dying souls, sunk in wickedness all about you, you would not do anything to prevent them from being saved?"

"Saved!" leered the man. "You don't want 'em saved. Why! if us blokes was converted, you 'd be out of yer job. You don't want ter save us."

The missionary made no reply. The sailor settled into his seat again and soon fell asleep. A man on the other side of the room rose and began to speak. Burroughs was all attention in an

instant. It was Maxon. He stood up to testify to his conversion, he said, and he went on to tell of the wonderful things Heaven had been doing for him. The missionary was deeply moved and invited him to sit with the other converts. Then two or three wrecks of humanity shambled to the front seat, and when it was time to close the meeting the missionary, looking across the room at Burroughs, asked if there was any brother present who would volunteer to come forward and help him talk with the penitents. Burroughs, who was raging internally, said "I will," with startling emphasis and stalked up to the front seat and sat down by the disconcerted Maxon.

"What are you here for?" he asked, sternly.

"Doctor . . . oh, pray pardon me."

"Answer my question."

"I — I — they give a free supper to the converts every night after service."

"Is that any excuse for your imposing upon a good man like this minister?"

"No, no; I have done very wrong. But this is the first time. You see, I have spent all my money for lodging and" —

"Morphine."

"Yes, I suppose so. And I heard about this place and thought I would try it."

Burroughs sat in thought for a moment.

"If you have a spark of manhood left in you, you will get out of here at once. Or else," he added, after further thought, "you will tell this minister the exact truth. Then I will see that you have a good supper to-night, and to-morrow you can start out with your wire baskets again."

"No, no!" hastily exclaimed Maxon. "You shall not do such a thing for me. I will not take charity from you."

"Is n't it better to take honest charity honestly, than to juggle with solemn things and fool a good man as you have done to-night?"

"Yes, yes, of course; but not from you — I could n't take it from you. If only I could explain! I would not take charity from you to save my life. Let me go! Let me go! You have been too kind to me already."

He rose and slunk out. Burroughs did not attempt to detain him. When the missionary had finished with his converts and had sent them upstairs for their supper, he turned to Burroughs in surprise.

"Where 's that man you were talking to?" he asked.

Burroughs told him what he knew about Maxon and the missionary listened intently. He had the

earnest, anxious eyes common to men whose life work is among the unfortunate and vicious. When Burroughs had finished his story, the missionary sighed.

"It is a great trial to us to know that we are imposed upon," he said; adding with a sudden glow of feeling, "Yet I would rather be fooled a hundred times than to miss one genuine case."

Burroughs told the errand for which he had come to the mission and then went out, glad to fill his lungs with fresh air after breathing the vitiated atmosphere of the mission hall.

Down in a dark alley off Pacific Avenue, Maxon, with tremulous haste, was putting his last dose of morphine into his needle-scarred arm.

CHAPTER IX

GUIDO MASCARO'S MARIA

Guido Mascaro kept a meat and vegetable market in that part of the Italian quarter where most of the Sicilians lived. His family consisted of his young wife Maria, and his old mother, who was the torment of his existence. Guido employed two youths from his own village to peddle vegetables through the district on push-carts during the summer, but the bulk of his business was done in his shop. On the third floor above were the two rooms which he called home, and here, one day, he argued with his mother, who was preparing dinner, while Maria tended the shop downstairs.

"Pah!" Guido cried, "I will have no old woman! Look at the little Tommaso Vercelli, with back so humped. See Bizzoni's wife, who no more can walk alone. I will go to the American doctor on the hill. My Maria shall have the best. I care not for bandy-legged babies. So, for the love of the Virgin, be still, mother. Keep to thy pots and thy pans and now to thy soup, for my stomach

is empty. Pah on thy old woman! I will not have her."

"Satan seat thee at his right hand, thou sneerer," screamed old Bettina, waving her ladle. "Seventy years I have lived and sixteen children I have borne and no American lent a hand. Is thy Maria so much better than thine own mother? Thee will see who will win, I who am very wise, or thee with thy silly American doctor who as yet has not a hair on his face."

"Thy old woman has many hairs on her face," laughed Guido, snapping his fingers. "Take her to the barber, mother, for I warn thee, if thou dost bring her here I will singe the hair from her face as Beppo, the butcher, singes pin-feathers from a plucked goose!"

Bettina grunted expressively and bent once more above her soup kettle. She did not deign to follow up her argument. She felt secure in the belief that her own shrewd wit and the interposition of the blessed saints would frustrate the unhallowed schemes of the impertinent Guido. It was not the first time that the two had quarreled on this subject, nor was it to be the last, and each new altercation only left the mother and son more determined to succeed in their conflicting plans. And through it all, Maria, the object of the strife, would

sit by the window, the sunlight picking out threads of gold in her red-brown hair, as she crooned some Borghese melody, so happy that no thought of coming peril could disturb her spirits.

Guido went up to the clinic at St. Luke's one afternoon and told Burroughs and La Signorina all about it. The old mother had faith in a certain ancient crone who was supposed to be the especial favorite of the saints. Guido, who had come to America in a formative period, was skeptical. He believed in the American doctor. Burroughs agreed to take Maria's case, and made out a patient's card in her favor, which Guido bore back to his tenement in triumph and shook under his mother's sharp nose with many a sneer and gibe. Bettina viewed the bit of green pasteboard with suspicion. She believed that it was a sort of diabolic charm. One night she arose from her corner by the stove and stealthily crept into the tiny bedroom where Guido, sprawling on the high, bunchy bed, lay sleeping in his clothes, as was his custom. She had scarcely begun to search through his pockets when he awoke and drove her from the room with much muscular expedition and language which left no doubt in Bettina's mind that her son would not be interfered with. After that, she did not refer to the green card and a sort of armed peace ensued.

Burroughs was long-suffering and it was fortunate, for Guido had a way of coming up the hill of an evening and interrupting the student at his books to tell him stories about Maria, made picturesque by broken English and gestures more eloquent than words. He told how he had first met Maria when she was a little girl and he a strapping fellow of twenty-two. He had seen her dancing amid the vines on the hillside above their village, with the sunshine flecking her tawny hair — Guido was very proud of that hair, "like-a zee gold-a," and he had fallen in love with her at once. She was shy; her father was the proud possessor of a tiny vineyard and three solid silver spoons. So Guido had come to America to better his fortunes.

"Ah, mia Maria!" he would interpolate, with a gusty sigh at the memory of those months of waiting, "I deed love-a 'er-a!"

In the land of promise he had worked and starved until a year before, he had gone back to Italy, matched the old man spoon by spoon with good gold pieces, and had brought the daughter back in triumph. But his old mother had insisted upon coming, too! Well, the blessed saints will teach a man to be patient if he pray much to them. We cannot always choose. At the end of his recitals he would lapse into silence, his chin resting upon

his breast, till Burroughs, anxious for the morrow's recitations, would say kindly, " Well, Guido ! " and then the simple soul would look up with that expression of absolute trust common to his class and say with conviction, —

" I t'ink-a Americano dottore be-a good-a to mia Maria."

Then he would throw his battered cap on his curly head, say " Good-by," and disappear into the night. La Signorina went to see Maria and returned to St. Luke with a look of quiet determination in her eyes.

" What we will do ? " she asked ; " Bettina will have that old woman first at the house before us. She live near. And so prett' is Maria ! I not like that old woman come to her."

" By the Lord Harry ! " exclaimed Burroughs, using his favorite oath, " she shall not get ahead of us. I 'll warn Guido to come here at the first sign. Day or night — if I 'm not at school — I 'll be ready for that case."

" I will be so, too," said La Signorina, quietly.

Then came the days when Burroughs left an itinerary of his visits upon the office desk, so that he might be quickly located in case of a sudden call. Then came the nights when he — like Guido — slept in his clothes, ready to answer the office bell

on an instant. Other calls came and were faithfully attended to, but about Maria's case there hung an especial interest which lifted it out of the humdrum of similar cases. It took the shape in Burroughs's mind of a contest between superstition and truth; the nineteenth century and the dark ages.

One evening he was sleeping out two nights' weariness in one, for the night before he had sat up till nearly dawn attending to some extra school work. He was just in the depths of his first sound sleep, when the tinkle of the little bell awoke him and sent him hastening to the door. Guido's voice soon told the story. Burroughs thrust his feet into his shoes, threw on topcoat and cap, seized his satchel and rushed out of doors. In front of the dispensary stood La Signorina. Burroughs uttered an exclamation of surprise. He had expected to go to her boarding place to call her.

"You think I not watch too, dottore," she said, noting his surprise. "I see Guido come, and I am ready."

Burroughs gave her his arm that they might walk together swiftly, and ordered Guido, who had fallen two paces behind, to lead the way.

"Is the mother with Maria?" the student asked, as they hurried along.

"Nobawdy veeth-a Maria," panted Guido, over his shoulder. "Madre go-a get-a old vooman. Guido go-a get-a dottore."

"Heavens and earth!" ejaculated Burroughs.

La Signorina dropped his arm.

"Go," she exclaimed, with determination, "go; I not walk so fast. I come with Guido. He is good man."

It was against Burroughs's code of chivalry to leave a woman alone in the slum district at dead of night with an irresponsible Sicilian, but Maria's claim was strong, and he started off on a run.

As he went along he could not help wondering if it were really worth his while to be routed out of bed for a simple case that any experienced person could attend to as well as he. Then he thought of Guido's trustful assertion, "I t'ink-a dottore be-a good-a to mia Maria," and all doubts on that point vanished from his mind. But supposing he should be too late, and the old woman should reach the tenement before him? He quickened his steps still more. Supposing there were complications with which he had never met? He was only a student, and medical students are painfully aware of their limitations despite what they may often assume. He could only do his best.

There was something which Burroughs did not

know. It was the fact that La Levatrice, unfortunately for herself and her patients, had acquired a fondness for bad American whiskey. When Bettina, at the first signal of distress, had hobbled off to the neighboring street, and had climbed four flights of stairs, she found her old woman just recovering from a long bout with the whiskey flask. Bettina, who had learned many of the dark ways of American civilization, plied the sulky Levatrice with whiskey till her inertia was overcome, and she pronounced herself ready to go downstairs. Bettina had much trouble in guiding the unsteady mountain of flesh down the slippery staircases, but the street was at length reached. Here La Levatrice's mood changed; she seated herself upon the door-sill, and refused to proceed. Bettina, wild at the prospect of defeat, lashed her with sharp tongue and voice that quickly ran up the scale and ended in a shriek. Unkempt heads were thrust from windows. Voices uttered curses and maledictions; at length some one suggested the approach of the police officer. Thereupon La Levatrice rose with tipsy dignity and followed her guide. Two or three denizens of the neighborhood, who had rushed out of doors at the sound of strife, joined Bettina, and thus escorted, the old crone led her unsteady companion toward the scene of action.

She did not realize how much time had been consumed in persuasion, and as she came to the end of her own street, her sharp eyes detected the form of the hated American as he passed under the gas-lamp at the upper end of the street. She did not know it, but Burroughs had seen her.

"It 's nip and tuck," he said to himself, "and tuck shan't get it!"

Bettina dragged her old woman onward by main force. Burroughs was rushing along at the top of his speed. He had a greater distance to go.

"Mother of God!" shrieked Bettina, "he will pass us on the steps, on the stairway, on the very door-sill itself. Quick! Thou beloved of the saints! Let not the devilish American boy defeat thee! Quick! Quick!"

The house was reached; she dragged her charge inside, shutting the door with a bang, and pushing La Levatrice toward the stairway. The hag had sense enough to slowly ascend while Bettina shrieked through the darkness, urging haste. Then her voice snapped off with a jerk as Burroughs flung the door open and stumbled in. It was so dark he could not see, but he heard Bettina whining beside him, and caught the heavy breathing of La Levatrice in front. Thus guided, he sprang up the staircase. But the old woman's

strength had failed, and she had sunk in a panting, greasy heap on the stairs. Burroughs stumbled over her, and fell. Bettina, close behind, clutched at his calves, and he felt her long, sharp nails dig the flesh, while La Levatrice buried her fat hands in his hair. He was excited enough to have laughed in spite of his discomfort, had it not been that he heard above stairs that sound of moaning which tells its own story. Voices he heard, too, for all the women in the house had rushed to Maria's aid. To them he cried for a light, and it was they who brought a lamp and extricated him from the clutches of the two old women.

There followed in Guido's little tenement the hardest battle Burroughs had ever fought, and heaven only knows what would have been the outcome if La Levatrice had been in command. She huddled inertly in one corner of the kitchen, while Bettina sat beside her rocking to and fro in abject grief. La Signorina, who arrived in good time with Guido, went out and scolded them both roundly.

It was nearly sunrise when the struggle was over, and it seemed to Burroughs that he had never seen motherhood so beautiful as that which lay enshrined in the little bedroom of Guido Mascaro's tenement. He and La Signorina walked

home very quietly. It had been a hard night for both of them, and they had little to say. When they reached the crown of the hill, they paused a moment in silence. The sky arched vast and blue above them, with the tree-boughs of the burying-ground penciled in feathery gray against it. The great gold crosses on the towers of Santa Maria caught the first flush of dawn. The harbor was like liquid opal. As they paused, a bugle's silvery note sounded reveille from the fort at the harbor's mouth, and the city's day had begun.

Burroughs drew a deep, full breath. "Signorina," he said softly, "this has been worth while."

"I not know what you mean 'worth while,'" she said, earnestly, "but I did hear the great thanks of Guido; I did see the happy eyes of Maria. That is enough, dottore; that is enough."

CHAPTER X

A HEART SPECIALIST

Burroughs knew Celestia Carmanti in the general, impersonal way in which he was acquainted with all his neighbors on Spring Hill Street, and La Signorina had told him about Barone's hopeless quest. He thought very little about the matter, however, as he was absorbed in his own affairs. How Celestia was bearing her separation from her lover had not concerned him until one Saturday morning when La Signorina entered the office with the greeting, —

"Take care you not fall in love."

"Why?"

"Oh, so much of trouble it will make for you. If the young lady loves you, good; but see what time you will be writing letters and making calls, and thinking of her. And if she not love you — ah, *povero dottore!* You would not sleep, not eat, not care if live or die!"

Burroughs laughed, and inquired if she supposed that he would be as sentimental as that.

"I not know what you mean, 'sent'mental,' but I do see so many poor girls and boys that so much do love, and *poverini, poverini!* See now Celestia. All the time she do lie in bed, all the time cry; not like to eat, not sing, not care to talk" —

"Well, well, she must be pretty far gone."

La Signorina paid no attention to the interruption, but went on to explain that the old father had sent for Doctor Burroughs to come and prescribe for his daughter. The nurse had agreed that it would be well to call a physician, although she believed that love for Barone was the only thing which weighed upon the girl's spirits.

"So go, now, dottore. You have med'cine for the heart?" she asked.

"No, I have not," said Burroughs, emphatically. "What could I do for a lovesick girl?"

"Oh, you will give something to make sleep, and then you will say to the father, 'Your daughter will die, if she not marry Barone.'"

"Girls don't die from love affairs," said Burroughs.

"Not Americans, no; but Italian girls, yes. If you can fright'n the old father he will be good, and let marry his daughter the good Barone. Such nice boy is Barone, and he is very cross man, the old father."

"Well, I won't go," replied Burroughs, putting on his topcoat. "I have enough to do without making matches."

"'Make match,'" pondered the nurse, after Burroughs had gone out. "I not want him to make match . . . how he can make match?" She looked earnestly at two burnt matches in the coal-hod, behind the stove. "I not understand English. It is queer language."

Saturday is ashman's day on Spring Hill, and a long line of barrels decorated the curbings. As Burroughs went out he heard Miss Cutter's strident tones, and saw her in her doorway with upraised fist. An ashman stood beside his cart, grinning.

"You 're a pretty feller!" the old woman cried. "You 're not much like that ashman what died. He was always ready ter do a favor. 'N' where 's he now? He 's a-walkin' the golden streets er Paradise, and a-feelin' ser kinder nice thinkin' how he was good ter a poor old woman like me. Lucky 't ain't you that 's dead! Yer 'd be a-hollerin' fer a drop er water ter cool th' end of yer tongue."

The ashman grinned more expansively, and winked at his companion on the wagon.

"I ain't no cooper," he said. "It ain't my business ter mend ash barrels."

"No more 't warn't his," piped Miss Cutter. "But he was a Christian, 'n' if a hoop sprung on my barr'l, he 'd take my hammer 'n' fix it up. How d' ye do, Doctor Burroughs," she added, in a softer tone, and with an elaborate bow. "I 'm in trouble as usu'l, all on account o' this pesky ashman."

"Oh, don't be hard on the ashman, Miss Cutter," said the interne; "he 's a busy man. I 'll mend your barrel for you after luncheon."

"Yer will, will yer?" piped Miss Cutter. "No, yer won't, neither. D' yer think I 'd let a nice, clean little man like you touch my ash barr'l? No, I thank yer; I hope I hev some sense er compassion left, if I do live in this heathenish place."

"All right, Miss Cutter," laughed the student; "it 's your barrel; suit yourself."

"Thank yer, dar-tory," said the old dame, bending nearly double in a bow of mock humility. "Thank yer, kindly. I think it is, 'n' I think I will."

Burroughs went off chuckling to himself. Miss Cutter was a never-failing source of amusement to him. He went to Pietro Carmanti's house to see Celestia, as La Signorina knew he would in spite of his seeming indifference. He was greeted with great ceremony and ushered into the front room,

which the devoted parents had fitted up for their daughter's sleeping apartment. Burroughs was impressed by the daintiness of the room, although he could not have described afterwards the brass bedstead with its valance of hand-made lace, the pretty rug upon the floor, the comfortable chairs, and the prie-dieu in the corner, with its crucifix, rosary, and tiny red lamp burning before the picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

Celestia had risen that morning in anticipation of the doctor's call, and she reclined gracefully in a Morris chair, the dark green cushions displaying her negligée gown of pale pink silk to great advantage. As Burroughs entered, she began to moan and wring her hands.

"All-a time-a so," her mother said, anxiously; while Pietro exclaimed, "Make-a well-a the girl, I geev-a dottore much-a mon'. Pietro rich-a; much rich-a."

Celestia opened her eyes.

"Good-morning," she said, in a weak, patient voice.

"Good-morning," replied Burroughs, primly.

He approached and gingerly put his fingers on her wrist.

"Are you in pain?" he asked after a moment's consideration of her perfectly normal pulse.

"N-no, not much, I think," murmured Celestia, "but I feel so droopy all the time and so sad. I am sure I shall die."

Burroughs knit his brows and looked profound. The parents watched him eagerly, sure that a wonderful cure was about to be performed.

"Let me see your tongue," commanded the student.

Celestia permitted the tip of her tongue to protrude, Burroughs inspected it with all the professional dignity he could command. Then he suddenly asked the disconcerting question.

"Why does your father object to Somebody?"

Celestia gave a little gasp and drew in her tongue.

"Because he is poor," she answered, not looking up. "He is poor, but he works very hard and is good and smart. Some day I know he will make money. I love him and I will not give him up. Oh, Doctor Burroughs! If you only knew what I suffer! I can't sleep at night and I can't eat. I know my heart will break. Do help me; please do!"

She seized Burroughs's hand impulsively and began to cry. The student disengaged himself as quickly as possible. He was a little shy of demonstrative women patients.

"I cannot do anything to help you," he said, quietly. "We have no medicine for lovers. You must cure yourself."

"But I don't want to get well," wailed Celestia. "I have nothing to live for. I can never be happy again. I shall go down on the pier and jump off. I know I shall."

"I am not sure but what that would be a good plan," replied Burroughs, meditatively; "but," he added with conviction, "I can tell you, Miss Carmanti, the corpses they take out of that harbor are dreadful looking things."

Celestia sniffed and looked sidelong at her adviser. Somehow her plan for figuring as a lovely suicide lost its charm at his words.

"But what shall I do?" she moaned.

"Go to work with your music and stop fussing with your father."

"I can't sing. You 're very heartless, doctor."

"You must sing," replied Burroughs, with a coldness which set Celestia sobbing once more. "And more than that, you are not going to die. You would n't jump off that pier for anything. You are not doing the right thing by Somebody when he is working so hard to be the fine gentleman your father expects you to marry. It would

serve you right if he gave you up. He has no wish for a pale-faced, crying wife, I am sure."

Celestia was by this time a convulsive mass of fluffy pink, her sobs growing more and more audible. The mother with anxious eye bent above her caressingly and murmured, "*Poverina, Poverina!*" The father glowered at the student as if not knowing whether to turn him out or let him go on with the cure. Burroughs, as remorseless as the Council of Ten, continued his inquisition. He knew perfectly well the best mode of treatment for his patient.

"Now, if you do not stop this crying, I shall have to tell your father what is the matter with you."

"How can you be so heartless," came from the depths of the cushions. "I don't believe you were ever in love or you would know how I suffer."

A flush crept across Burroughs's face and the lines around his mouth hardened. He did not speak for a time and then he said more kindly, —

"Miss Carmanti, Some one hears from you every week through the nurse. Do you suppose he enjoys thinking that while he is working hard for your sake, you are moping around the house, losing the power of that beautiful voice he is so proud of? He does n't like it, you may be sure. No

man would. Now try to be brave. I'll leave something to quiet your nerves. Rest to-day and to-morrow and keep thinking of pleasant things. Monday, dress up in your best clothes and go up town for a lesson, if you can arrange for it."

Celestia came out of the cushions.

"I'll try," she said. "I had never thought it might make a difference to him. Do you suppose I shall get well?"

"You certainly will. I have great confidence in you and I know that you will be a brave girl." Then he added, with a gallantry worthy of Raymond himself, "You must not spoil those eyes and that face by crying and under-eating."

The last shot told. Celestia sat up, tossed back her hair, and wiped her eyes.

"I'll try," she said, with a smile that would have thrown Barone into a rapture, but which was quite lost on the unsusceptible Burroughs, who forthwith opened the ever-present satchel and counted some pellets into a bottle.

"One of these each hour," he said. "They are easy to take. Follow my advice and I'm sure you will be better at once."

He shook hands with her and followed her parents out of the room. Pietro was delighted with the sudden improvement of his darling. He in-

sisted upon offering money for the cure, and it was only with difficulty that Burroughs made him understand that the services at St. Luke's were free beyond the stipulated ten cents. Then the mother flew to the pantry and brought out a jar of preserved peppers, and the father rushed down cellar, returning with two bottles of home-made wine, which he forced into the student's hands. Burroughs departed well laden, after assuring the parents that Celestia would be quite well in a day or two, and he carried the spoils of office back to his room. There was an odd smile on his face as he went, and he said to himself, as he slipped the bottles into the pockets of his top coat, —

"'P. M. Burroughs, Heart Specialist.' — Would n't Raymond shout!"

CHAPTER XI

DR. RAYMOND'S MISTAKE

TIME went on and still Raymond had not plucked up sufficient courage to ask Margaret Worthington to be his wife. That she would refuse his offer did not really occur to him. He did not know what failure meant, for his sunny nature had met with few disappointments and no vicissitudes. He had always been good, had always loved everybody, and everybody had always loved him. He was very kind-hearted, and the continued petting of mother, grandmothers, and aunts had left him unselfish to a surprising degree. He was wealthy; he was handsome; he was clean-minded, clear-headed, honest. That everything had gone his way was not to be wondered at. Yet he dreaded to commit himself to a promise of life-long importance, not fearing that he would weary of Margaret, but because he knew how well he enjoyed his independence.

Sometimes as he drove through the quiet uptown streets on his round of professional visits, he

felt very sure of himself, and inwardly vowed that he would settle the matter that very evening. But by the time that dinner was over, he would discover that he had changed his mind and was less confident. Upon such occasions he would shut himself up in his office with his guitar and sing "Faint Heart ne'er won Fair Lady" and other salutary ballads until it was too late to make calls. Then he would emerge for a glance at the evening paper or a game of cribbage with his mother. He usually consulted his mother about his various plans, for the two enjoyed a most delightful comradeship, but the fear that she would dread the prospect of sharing her son with another deterred him from telling her of his attachment to Margaret. It was only when Burroughs asked him why he was content to postpone so much probable happiness that he finally brought himself to the point of a proposal. Burroughs's way of putting it was both forceful and sensible. Raymond wondered why he himself had not realized that he was wasting time. So one evening he went to Margaret's.

She greeted him cordially and was evidently glad to see him. He was enraptured, wondering within himself why he had delayed so long. She wore a pretty blue bodice and had a ribbon of the same

tint in her hair. Raymond was glad the color was so becoming to her, for it was his favorite. As they talked together he thought that her kind eyes had never looked so serenely beautiful; that her lips were very red; that her cheek looked as soft as velvet. He was glad he had made up his mind at last; and what a lucky fellow he was, to be sure!

When Raymond was announced and Margaret left her father and mother in the library, Mr. Worthington looked up from his reading and asked, —

"Who is it?"

"Doctor Raymond," answered his wife, glancing at the card the maid had brought in.

Mr. Worthington laid down his book.

"Now there is a man!" he said. "I should be proud" —

"So should I."

"When his father died the property was estimated at nearly a million and it has not depreciated in value," said the father.

"And he is his mother's only heir," went on Mrs. Worthington. "She was a Lovering, you remember, and inherited a third of the old estate. But we must not talk like match-makers."

"That is true. It is bad enough to be match-breakers."

"You are not sorry you broke up that affair with young Burroughs?"

"Not in the least. I only hope that Margaret will be given an opportunity to console herself with the doctor. I don't like that hungry look in her eyes."

"You imagine that. She was never in better spirits in her life."

"I am glad to hear you say so. She pleaded so earnestly for her impecunious lover that I have been afraid that she was eating her heart out over the loss of him."

"She is too sensible a girl for that. She knows that we have planned to have her occupy a prominent position in society. She will submit to our wish, I know, and will fill her place with credit."

"She would not be her mother's daughter if she did not," replied Mr. Worthington, gallantly.

If Raymond had known what was being said in the library, the eyes of his mental vision would have opened very wide. That he had a distinct money value was the least of his considerations. He accepted his money as a necessary adjunct of life, not as a thing to be proud of, and certainly not as something which made him a more eligible parti. Finances were very far from his thought at the moment. He had asked Margaret to play

for him and she seated herself at the piano, bidding him choose the selections which he wished to hear.

He rummaged through the music cabinet picking out his favorites, choosing those which were filled with a subtile quality that Raymond's music-loving heart told him might prepare them both for the all-important moment.

"You must sing for me," she said, at length. "It is not fair that I should do all the work."

She rose and Raymond seated himself at the piano.

"What shall I sing for you?" he asked, dreamily.

"You may choose for yourself," she replied. "I shall be perfectly satisfied with your selection."

He sang a bit by Nevin, then one of Clayton Johns's dainty ballads. Then he sang the song which he had often sung to himself as he looked at her photograph.

> "There is no pain too heavy for the bearing,
> I dread not loss nor sorrow's thorny smart;
> There is no hurt I 'd ask thee to be sparing —
> Crush me!
> If thou wilt deign to crush me on thy heart!"

The opening notes moved like a chorale, a prayer of consecration set to music. Then a strenuousness carried the theme to its climax and the ending was

a pæan of triumph. When the brief song was done Raymond turned to Margaret. There were tears in her eyes. She had forgotten his presence and was thinking only of that last, sweet hour with Philip Burroughs and of his close embrace.

"Margaret, my darling," Raymond said, "I was singing to you." . . .

A few moments later he passed out of her presence and the servant opened the street door for him. His mind was in a chaos. — Margaret had rejected him. She loved some one else. He had not thought of that possibility and his surprise was complete. He felt deeply disappointed and a little hurt. He had thought Margaret was very fond of him. He made his way sorrowfully to York Chambers, where his mother sat in the library awaiting his return. She had a cup of hot chocolate for him, but somehow he did not care to drink it. He felt very forlorn. When he rose to go to his room he paused in the doorway and said with almost childish wistfulness, —

"I'm very tired to-night, Mother. Don't you want to pretend that I am a boy again and come by and by to tuck me in and kiss me good-night?"

CHAPTER XII

BONDAGE

THERE came a day near the middle of February which, in after times, Burroughs could not recall without a feeling of horror. He was busy with his mid-year examinations and studied every night until one or two o'clock, taking tests on alternate days. He had no hope of ranking high in his class. He could not do so, while devoting so much time to outside work. But the practical knowledge gained from service at St. Luke's stood him in good stead in the more theoretical work of the medical school.

Upon this tragic day Capotosti's Gracia was sitting on the curbstone in the street where she lived and striking two broken saucepans together. The Amadeo of Tony Reggerio heard the noise and leaned out of a third story window to see what was going on. He was all alone in the tenement, as his mother had gone to bring some firewood from the avenue, where a building was being torn down. Amadeo could not see the sidewalk easily, for he was not very tall; so he climbed up on the

window sill. The wife of Capotosti, whose tenement was on the ground floor, heard an unusual sound, a sort of dull thud. What she found on the sidewalk she lifted with tearful tenderness and carried to St. Luke's.

There was no examination at school that day and Burroughs had not yet left the office. He worked all day over the unconscious child, summoning to his assistance the physician under whose supervision he was practicing. About an hour after dark little Amadeo died in his mother's arms and Capotosti's wife carried the body home.

Burroughs went out for his supper, but was too tired to eat heartily. He soon returned to the office and took up his books. The hardest examination of the series was before him on the following day, but he had scarcely settled himself for an evening of work when La Signorina unlocked the street door and entered the office carrying the child of the woman with whom she lodged. The little one was unconscious and a single glance showed the cause. A deep gash ran across the palm of her left hand and the fingers hung loose and lifeless, the white tendons gleaming against the red wound. She had fallen and cut herself with a broken tumbler. They laid her upon the operating table. Burroughs's hands trembled as he selected the

instruments for La Signorina to sterilize, but when he began his work, his grasp was firm and his touch steady. The tendons had contracted. It was a delicate task to make the necessary incisions and draw them down. La Signorina, always equal to an emergency, worked tirelessly, comforting the mother, whose face was dripping with the perspiration of anxiety, and speaking reassuringly to the older sister of the child, who crouched in the background, sobbing. After three hours' work the tendons were united, the arm was dressed, and the child was taken home to be cared for during the night by the faithful nurse.

The air in the office was heavy with the combined odors of kerosene and iodoform. Burroughs opened the window and paced up and down the room to keep from being chilled. It had begun to snow in the early afternoon and the wind had risen steadily until now strong gusts from the sea drove the sleety snow in at the window. As Burroughs paused in front of the casement he could hear what he had never heard before on Spring Hill Street; the sound of waves breaking on the beach beyond the park. It must be a terrible storm at sea to thus affect the waters of the harbor. He thought with a shudder of the wrecks that would strew the coast next day and of the fate of many a sailor.

When he was settled at his desk once more he found it almost impossible to apply himself to his books. The day had been one long nerve strain, and the mournful howl of the gale and the rattling of the shutters added to his feeling of nervous apprehension. Suddenly the street bell tinkled. Burroughs sprang up and went to the door, carrying his lamp. A blast of wind nearly extinguished the light as he opened the door, but he could see the white face of Maxon, who leaned against the frame, breathing heavily.

"Forgive me," he moaned, as Burroughs dragged him in and closed the door. "I tried to do without it. Won't you help me? I did it for you."

He staggered into the office and sank upon a chair, exhausted with his battle with the storm and the violent struggle for breath.

"You 've stopped taking it for my sake?" said Burroughs, incredulously. "How am I to know that you are not fooling me as you did that worker at the mission?"

Maxon turned his bloodshot eyes towards Burroughs with an expression of misery, which haunted the student for many days.

"See!" he said, putting a shaking hand into the recesses of his old coat and producing some money; "I 've spent nothing for morphine for three days."

Burroughs went out to the store closet and brought some beef extract in a cup. He added hot water from the tea kettle on the top of the stove, and held the cup to Maxon's lips.

"Drink this," he said, kindly.

Maxon drank as well as he could between his gasps, choking a little, but not relinquishing the cup until it was empty. Burroughs drew the rocking-chair near the stove, and motioned him to sit therein. Then he stooped down and removed the wet, ragged shoes. Maxon wore no stockings, and his feet were red and chilblained. He held them away from the fire while Burroughs produced a pair of his own socks and put them on his patient.

"You are very kind," Maxon gasped. "I am ashamed to trouble you again when you told me not to come here. I stayed at the lodging house till I knew I could not resist any longer. You will stand by me, won't you? Don't send me away. Don't! Don't!"

"I'm not going to send you away," exclaimed Burroughs, with a sudden rush of feeling. "We will fight this out together."

The student knew that if Maxon could hold out until the crisis of his attack was past, his sufferings would decrease, and subsequent spasms would be

less and less violent. When the worst of the struggle was over, it would be well to give a small quantity of morphine, that he might regain his strength in sleep. Burroughs watched his patient carefully as the long hours wore away. They were the most lonely hours Burroughs had ever spent, for to his overwrought nerves the companionship of this victim of opium made a loneliness more terrible than solitude. Sometimes Maxon seized Burroughs's hands and well-nigh crushed them in his frenzy. Sometimes the student put his arms around the exhausted man and held him by main force to keep him from falling on the floor when the paroxysms grew more violent and his weakness caused his body to bend almost double. Sometimes the sufferer cried out for death. Sometimes he demanded relief through the hypodermic needle; sometimes he threatened to kill Burroughs; sometimes he cursed; sometimes he prayed. Sometimes within the office all was still save for the gasp, gasp, gasp, of the enslaved man. And through it all, with every sweep of the gale, Burroughs's ear, quickened by excitement, caught the hollow note of the waves as they broke in the darkness upon the deserted beach.

When the wan daylight crept in through the shutters, the storm had ceased, and Maxon lay

asleep on Burroughs's couch. The exhausted student stood and looked down with a thrill of compassion upon this wreck who had turned to him in the time of moral and physical weakness. There was a mystery about this man. Brady had hinted at it; Maxon himself, with his ruined will, had hinted at it. What the secret was, Burroughs thought he should never know, but this craven creature's affection for him had made a great impression. This cry for help from the hell of a relentless habit had touched a deep and vibrant chord in his nature.

"Poor soul!" he murmured. "I will stand by you. We will fight it out together."

He left a message for the nurse concerning his patient, and went uptown for his breakfast and the examination which awaited him. He had no subsequent remembrance of his work, but it must have been creditable, for he afterward found his name on the list of those who had passed the test successfully. When he reached St. Luke's that afternoon he went directly to the back room. The cot bed was empty. The socks which he had put on Maxon's feet lay on the coverlet, neatly folded. La Signorina told Burroughs that Maxon had slept all the morning, waking once and drinking the broth she had made for him. A little while

before Burroughs came in she had gone out on an errand. On her return she found that Maxon had disappeared. On the desk in the office Burroughs found a note addressed to him.

"It is of no use," — the letter read, — "the habit is too strong. You have been more kind to me than any one else in the world would have been, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I wanted to do something for you, but I have only been a burden. I will never trouble you again. I shall not come back unless by some heavenly providence I may repay you for your goodness. I leave you a book of which I am very fond. Pray keep it as a remembrance of me. It is all that I can give you. My kind and faithful friend, good-by."

On the desk lay a small volume with calf-skin binding scratched and broken. Burroughs took it up and turned its worn, soiled pages sorrowfully. It was the precious copy of "Childe Harold."

CHAPTER XIII

SCARABINI'S DEFEAT

In the vacation that followed the mid-year examinations Burroughs tried to rest, and prepare for the work of the next semester. He thought many times of Maxon, but the mystery which surrounded the strange man remained unsolved, and he never came to St. Luke's again. His disappearance had almost a tragic aspect, for he was lost as completely as if the earth had opened and swallowed him up, and what his pitiful history was, Burroughs would never know in full. La Signorina believed that there was some interesting love affair in the man's lost past; but La Signorina was romantic, and Burroughs laughed at her for her notion. Miss Cutter congratulated him from having escaped alive from his association with so strange a specimen of humanity, but Burroughs, remembering that night of struggle, could think of Maxon only with feelings of particular tenderness. If Miss Cutter had been afraid of Scarabini her fears would have been better grounded.

The Spanish doctor's office was on the avenue, and therefore convenient to both the Italian and the Jewish quarters. He found that his practice among the poor Italians was steadily falling off, and one day, as he and his interpreter threaded a narrow street, he heard well-defined hisses as he passed a group of women. A little later an old woman, shuffling along the narrow sidewalk, pushed him off into the gutter, muttering "*Accidente voi!*" as she scowled her evident disapproval of him. He made no comment upon these phenomena, but maintained a crafty silence. He had his theories about the cause of this disaffection. He did not believe that Burroughs or any other American was clever enough to outdo him. Any one who spoke English he did not fear. It was only when an unknown tongue became the medium of intercourse that he felt himself in the quicksand. His suspicions of Scarabini had been increasing for some time. The Italian was moody, oftentimes morose, and not infrequently he treated the doctor with a rudeness which showed unmistakably that he despised his employer. When the two returned to the office that morning the Spanish doctor began to observe Scarabini closely. Had the young man realized it he would have been startled, for that careful watching was a signal of coming trouble.

"Sgarabini," said the doctor at length, in his smooth, conciliatory voice, "we haf put poor pizness mit der Dagoes. Vhy?"

"How do I know?" returned the Italian, sulkily.

"I nod care ter make much talk mit you, Sgarabini, bud if there be not many Italians at der glinic to-morrer, you vill lose your job. I can vind many fellers bedder than you."

Scarabini shrugged his shoulders.

"Do as you like," he replied. "It is not my fault that your clinics fall off. It is that cursed American who does it."

The doctor began to chuckle in his crafty way. In spite of his bravado, Scarabini shivered as he heard the hollow, heartless laugh.

"Gome here, Sgarabini," exclaimed the doctor.

Scarabini left the medicine bottles he was filling from a two gallon crock in the corner of the office and went over to the desk. He bent his hard, black eyes upon the doctor, but could not catch the shifty glance of the older man.

"Liz'en to me, Sgarabini," said the "Spaniard." "You vill haf much drouble finding an American vot vill do me. I understand them. I haf no fear of that keed. Vot he can do? But I know vell who has made me der drouble. Eet is you, Sgara-

bini. Now, you vill pring me good glinic to-morrer — er out you goes."

Scarabini shrugged his shoulders with a fine show of nonchalance. At heart he had small wish to lose his position, for it gave him peculiar facilities for promulgating a certain work among the Italians which was very vital to him. As long as he was connected with so great a mystery as medicine, he was a power in the community. To be sure, Burroughs was quietly but steadily breaking down that influence, but there were means — if worst came to worst — by which Burroughs could be effectually silenced.

There was a large chromo-lithograph hanging on the office wall just above the doctor's desk. It was entitled "Il Buono Samaritano," and was the one concession of the Semitic mind bent upon building up a Christian clientele. Scarabini's gaze rested half unconsciously on this picture. The unlucky traveler was represented as reclining upon the arm of the good Samaritan, his wounds gaping in most frightful fashion. There was one livid gash near the heart.

"It is not high enough up," mused Scarabini; "and it is better to strike from behind."

Then he collected his thoughts and looked at the doctor.

"You may curse me for a dog if I do not bring you a roomful of Dagoes to-morrow," he said, with sudden energy. "I will get the better of that American if" — he stopped and looked up at the wounds in the picture.

On the morning following, Burroughs set out to make a round of visits. The long storms and extreme cold had dealt very badly with the poor people, and there was much sickness and distress. As he passed the alley where Biaggio Carbone lived, he saw a woman coming towards him. She was bowed as if by age, yet she was not old. Her eyes had a vacant look and she muttered to herself as she approached. When she reached Burroughs she stepped up to him, threw open her shawl, and held up a bundle of rags.

"Rosa mia, Rosa mia piccola!" she murmured.

Burroughs recognized her. She was the insane wife of Carbone.

"Yes, yes," he said, gently, pulling the shawl about her shoulders, for the wind was very piercing. "Yes; Rosa."

She looked at him intently for a moment, the pupils of her eyes dilating. Then she uttered a wild shriek and cast herself down at his feet. Burroughs raised and steadied her as best he could. At her cry, windows were opened and heads were

thrust out. Two or three women rushed out of doors, talking excitedly. The big-eyed boy, Carbone's oldest child, ran up the alley and took hold of his mother, trying to soothe her apparent grief.

"She-a know-a youse," he panted, turning to Burroughs. "She-a not know-a an'body till youse. She-a say-a 'Dottore! Dottore!' Youse 'ear-a 'er-a?"

Burroughs heard her with swelling heart. He picked up the bundle of rags which the mother had dropped and placed it in her arms. She turned a wistful, half-intelligent gaze upon him and put out a toil-scarred hand to pat his shoulder, murmuring again and again with touching intonation, —

"Rosa mia, Rosa mia. Dottore, il dottore; si, si."

The women and children who had crowded around them talked incessantly.

"Poor theeng!" said one, "she know-a 'eem. 'E eez good dottore; 'e teck-a care Rosa."

"See!" said another, "she kiss-a zee hand-a."

"I t'ink-a veel cry, zee dottore," said a third, "see-a zee eye."

At that moment Scarabini emerged from a neighboring tenement whither he had gone in a vain search of patients for his employer. He stood on the upper step of the house and looked down

upon Burroughs and the crazed mother with a sneer. Burroughs saw him and the cruel look in his eyes. The student's wrath blazed up.

"See!" he cried out in his rage. "This is your work. Are n't you proud of it?"

The moment he spoke he knew that he had made a mistake, but his sympathies were strongly stirred, and Scarabini's appearance was intolerable.

"Pah, you pig!" exclaimed Scarabini, with an ill-mannered gesture; "what do I care for you! What about your own work? How well you fool the people! They think you only are their friend. It is easy enough to fool them. Sit up a few nights, pat this child, kiss that baby, chuck that pretty girl under the chin and the mischief is done, curse you!"

The people looked at Burroughs to see what he would do, but he had reached his second thought, and did not reply. Instead, he took the arm of Carbone's wife as the boy guided her down the alley to her tenement. And so kind was his manner that when Scarabini cried, "See the coward! He dares not fight!" a low hiss of scorn ran around the group of spectators, and one woman, bolder than the rest, stepped forward and shook her fist at him, exclaiming, —

"Ha! Signore Scarabini, look well to yourself. You will fool us no more. We have now a good friend."

Burroughs learned from Carbone's boy that the mother was as he had seen her at first — that she would sit all day playing like a child with the bundle of rags she called Rosa. Sometimes, he said, she would wander out on the street, but they had no fear for her, since she always returned safely. The father did not want her sent away, and as she was harmless, the police let her stay with the family, and a woman from the charities came each week to care for her. The boy begged Burroughs to come often, as he was the first person she had recognized since Rosa's death. This the student agreed to do, and left the poor creature crooning in apparent happiness over her pitiful bundle of rags.

Burroughs did not see Scarabini for several weeks, but from time to time he was warned by the Italians to beware of the defeated interpreter. At all these warnings Burroughs only laughed. He did not believe that he was of enough importance to excite continued hostility. He did not know that the Spanish doctor had dismissed his interpreter, and had taken down the picture of "Il Buono Samaritano," since his business among

the Italians had grown so small that he no longer catered to their New Testament prejudices. From that time on, he ceased to be an influence in the Spring Hill region, and Scarabini, going into the crayon portrait business with but small success, became a fast-diminishing speck on Burroughs's horizon.

CHAPTER XIV

THE NURSE OF DOMINIQUE

GAETANO RIZZA brought his little Dominique to St. Luke's one day in March when a noted eye specialist had a morning clinic. Burroughs stayed away from school that day to attend the operations and study the great doctor's methods. When Dominique's turn came, his father brought him into the office and began to talk at once. Rizza was a *grande signore* who dressed well, wore a gold watch and chain, and had a good business on the avenue.

"See!" he said, "I am not poor man. I pay you well. I not take my boy to 'ospit'l, for there they show all people to visitors. I not like all folks look, look at my boy. My wife dead, but in my house there is kind woman who will take good care my boy when is fixed the eye. How much I will pay?"

Burroughs explained that the fee was alike for all treatment and that St. Luke's was not a money-making institution.

"Yes, yes," replied Rizza, smiling, "then a present. I will make to doctors a small present; yes."

The specialist examined Dominique's eye.

"You must take this child to the hospital," he said. "He will need great care after the operation. I cannot trust the neighbor woman. But," he added to Burroughs, "it will be a fine operation. You must try to see it. The progress of recovery will be interesting, too. The whole thing would be invaluable to you."

"Do it here," said Burroughs. "I will keep the child. He can sleep in my bed and the nurse and I will manage to take care of him in some way."

"Very well. I will proceed," said the specialist, who was a man of quick thought and prompt action. "Get your ether."

Rizza kissed his child and they laid the little fellow on the operating table. The father sat down by the window, pulled out a newspaper, and pretended to read. The specialist worked quietly and deftly. Burroughs did not lose a single point. When the operation was finished, they carried the child into the back room and put him to bed. Burroughs and Rizza stayed until he came out from the ether and then they left him in charge of La Signorina. It was expected that after the

second night the child could go home to the care of the neighbor. La Signorina was delighted with the arrangement. She prepared broths and gruels on top of the office stove, and turned the "back alley" into a very interesting hospital ward. Rizza was in and out of the dispensary all the morning, meeting all expenses and expressing great satisfaction with his boy's condition.

Early on the afternoon of the next day a young woman, whose face and gown showed she was not of the Spring Hill district, came up the street toward St. Luke's. It was Margaret Worthington, and she looked with dismayed interest at the dirty-faced boys playing "Peggy" in the street, held her skirts up carefully to avoid the dirt and turned her face with real embarrassment from the frank looks of interest bent upon her by the women in the windows. La Signorina opened the door in answer to the tinkle of the bell.

"Is this the nurse?" asked the visitor, "and is Mr. Burroughs in his office?"

"I am nurse, but Dr. Burr's is not yet come from school. He will come at half-past three. You will wait for him?"

"I will come in," said Margaret; "but I will not wait to see Mr. Burroughs, as my errand is with you."

The nurse led the way into the office and Margaret's quick eye took in the details of the room. She saw the "kid with a dog," she saw the mulatto doll, she even noticed the lead pencils on the desk, sharpened as Burroughs used to sharpen hers in the high school with long, cleanly shaven points. The tears sprang to her eyes in spite of her determination to be very calm. "This is where he lives and works," she thought, and for a moment she could not speak. Then she said, —

"I have heard a great deal about the work that you are doing here, and I have come to see if there is anything I can do to help you. I am not very experienced, but I am deeply interested, and perhaps that will aid me in becoming useful. Will you not let me do some little thing?"

She did not realize the strength of appeal in her voice, but La Signorina did.

"I am so glad you did come," the nurse answered, after a moment's thought. "So much you may help us. We have in other room a poor baby who yesterday did have op'ration on the eye. At home there is no mother, and Doctor Burr's not like to send the poor baby to such home all alone. If you will come for few days and sit by the baby when is gone Doctor Burr's and I need make the calls, so much good you may do."

"Is he *very* dirty?" asked Margaret, feeling a natural shrinking from possible unknown horrors. La Signorina laughed.

"No, he is not dirt'," she said. "He is clean when he do come and I have given good bath, too. You need not be 'fraid."

She led the way through the waiting room and raised the hasp on the door leading to the "back alley." When Margaret saw the bandaged head on the pillow of Burroughs's narrow bed in the corner of the room, she quickly descended the steps and bent over the little one. For a moment she was silent, for her heart was beating very swiftly.

"So good has Doctor Burr's been to poor little boy!" went on La Signorina, in her quiet voice. "When the great doctor did make op'ration on the eye, Doctor Burr's did say 'Let him stay here to-night. I will take care.' When I go to my room I say, 'Ah! Dottore, how you will sleep to-night?' And he say, 'I not care for to sleep, to-night, Signorina, I have much to study and I sit up for that. It is just 's well the boy do stay.' And then the poor baby do cry much and say, 'Tata mio, tata mio, baciami!' 'What he say, Signorina?' says Doctor Burr's. I tell him poor baby want his papa kiss him good-night. And then Doctor Burr's did

put the arms close round the baby and kiss him so gentl' and so kind and poor baby cannot see and he think his papa has kissed him and so still he lie in arms ,of Doctor Burr's and say so happy, 'Tata mio, tata mio bello,' till he go sleep."

Margaret did not know why she trembled so, but she laid the little bandaged head against her breast and kissed the full red lips of the tiny patient.

"I will stay gladly, Signorina," she said.

To come in touch with her lover's work and life had been a growing desire of Margaret Worthington's heart. She was far from being the happy girl her mother believed her to be, and the knowledge of Doctor Raymond's love for her had but increased the sorrow in her heart. As the wish to do something at St. Luke's increased, she laughed at herself for entertaining such a thought. It was only story book girls and lovelorn damsels upon the stage who did such things, and she had always believed that they were very silly and improbable creatures. Yet finding a response to their sensations in her own breast, she began to believe that life is as strange as literature and that the stress of circumstance may develop unsuspected qualities. It was through a member of the board of managers that she learned that there were sometimes oppor-

tunities for helping at St. Luke's, and knowing that Burroughs was absent from the dispensary several hours each day, she had at length put her wishes into action. She felt a little frightened now that she had carried out her plan and she wondered how the experiment would result. The nurse busied herself with some sterilizing and Margaret sat by the couch holding the boy's hand in hers. He was half asleep and quite free from pain. Margaret noted every detail of the room; the odd jumble of furniture, the fragments of carpet on the uneven floor, the crowded but orderly corner where Burroughs's trunk stood. And this was his home!

"You will not need stay after quart' past three," said La Signorina. "Doctor Burr's do come at half past and soon I am through with the calls. You will give med'cine at half-past two and little drink of broth at three. Then, if you like, you go; or if you like, you stay see Doctor Burr's. You know him? He is nice young man."

"I have met him," said Margaret, quietly.

"Then you will like see him."

"No, not to-day," replied Margaret.

"Well, I go now," said La Signorina, whose romance-loving heart had already begun to conjecture about her guest. Then she put on her wraps, kissed Dominique, and departed.

Margaret dropped upon her knees and fell into the absorption of prayer. How close she had come to the heart she loved! Her mind was in a chaos, save for the one thought that she had drawn near to Philip Burroughs.

La Signorina thought about her guest a good deal that afternoon. The more she considered the matter, the more certain she became that the strange young woman had not come to St. Luke's simply out of a love for the work. For what then? There could be but one possible reason. And she had not told her name. She probably wished to keep her identity hidden. Very well! La Signorina would be the last one to reveal the particulars of her visit. If the visitor was the sweetheart of Doctor Burroughs, La Signorina would not give the young man the satisfaction of knowing that his fiancée had been to the dispensary. If the girl loved Burroughs in secret, surely La Signorina would not betray her. She would have to tell the interne that she had some one to care for Dominique, but not one word describing the new helper should pass her lips; and as for names, she could not reveal them, for she did not know them herself.

"You need not send home Dominique this day," she said the next morning, as she worked in the

store closet. "There is come a young lady who will sit in afternoon with him."

"A young lady!" exclaimed Burroughs, interested at once. "Who is she, and how did she happen to come here?"

"How I can tell? She did hear somewhere of our work, and did come," replied the crafty nurse, smiling to herself. "It is enough to know that she do take good care of Dominique, and that he do like her."

"Well, now, see here," said Burroughs, approaching the closet, "you need n't think you 're going to have any attractive young ladies down here without my seeing them. I shall come home early to-day on purpose to see her. What 's her name?"

"Oh, what boy!" cried the nurse, professing great impatience. "If I should tell name, what you would know? Must you know everything? No, you shall not. I will not tell you when so anxious you are. Go from here — *presto! presto!*"

Burroughs laughed, and went into the office for his hat.

"You remember what I say," he called back. "I get out of school early to-day, and I shall come down right away and see your pretty girl for myself."

"La, la, la!" laughed the nurse. "What I care? You go now to school; not stop for talk. *Cattivo ragazzo!*"

Burroughs chuckled to himself, and went out.

That afternoon Margaret appeared at her post promptly, and La Signorina lingered for a chat. She allowed the conversation to drift around to Burroughs, and she told the things she felt that her visitor would like to hear; stories of his kindness to the poor, of his increasing earnestness in his work, of the risk of contagion which he often ran, and of how his patients were coming to love him.

"Doctor Burr's was poor boy," she said, "and so he is sym*path*etic with these poor people. Other doctors there have been here who were kind, but they had not the same spir't as Doctor Burr's. The rich can give money to the poor people, and be good to them in one way, but it is only those who know well how hard is it to be poor who can give them the heart as Doctor Burr's gives. 'Ah, Signorina,' will say Doctor Burr's when I tell him too hard he do work, 'I am poor man. Must not I be good to these poor men? Why should I hold myself too high to work for them? Who will be friends, if not you and I? Will Spanish doctor? Will Scarabin'?' So good has Doctor Burr's been to my poor people; you cannot know."

"What a splendid man he must be for the place!" murmured Margaret.

"And so good he has been to me," continued La Signorina, musing. "Sometimes so tired I am, and much troubled with some things in Italy. Then I tell all to Doctor Burr's, and he do give so good *ad*vice, and say how sorry is he for me, and then he laugh and say, 'Cheer up, Signorina, cheer up! The worst is yet to come.' And we both do laugh, and I do feel better."

"Poor Phil," thought Margaret. "How often I have heard him say that! And something worse has been before him a great many times. If only his fortune would turn!"

As they talked, little Dominique sat up in bed holding the mulatto doll in close embrace, and singing in his baby voice, —

> "'Oh, Maria! Oh, Maria!
> Quanta bella fa amore co tia!
> Oh, Maria! Oh, Maria!'"

He knew only the opening lines of the frivolous love-song, and he sang them over and over again.

"What is he singing, Signorina?" questioned Margaret.

"Oh, it is silly song," said the nurse, shrugging her shoulders. "It say, 'Oh, Maria! Oh, Maria! How beautiful to make love to thee!' But you

must not learn it, for it is not Italian — it is dialect."

Margaret did not learn it, but many times afterward the dull little air came back to her, and she would seem to see the "back alley," and to hear those words of La Signorina's which had been like food to her hungry heart.

Soon afterward La Signorina went away, leaving Margaret alone with the boy. She had brought a bunch of violets with her that day, and Dominique was delighted when she allowed him to hold the bouquet in his hands. When he had buried his nose in the blossoms as long as Margaret thought was good for them, she put them in a glass of water and set them upon the window sill. Her mood was one of sadness. Rizza was to take his son away the next day, and her experiment would be over. She must not come again to the dreary bit of a room which she had hallowed with so many prayers. How empty her days would be without this little mission. All had gone well this time, but the risk of discovery was too great, and she was too frank a girl continually to deceive her father. The boy was growing restless, and tugging at his bandages. Margaret lifted him out of bed, and rocked him to and fro in her arms as she sang a lullaby she had learned somewhere.

"The blue haze hangs o'er the far-off town,
Sleep, bambino, sleep,
And the little white ships rock up and down,
Sleep, bambino, sleep.
Mother will sing till her work is done
Midst the rollicking vines in the hillside sun,
Blue, and purple, and green they run —
Sleep, bambino, sleep.

"Mouth for a grape and lips to kiss,
Sleep, bambino, sleep" —

True to his word, Burroughs came home early, and stood stock still in the centre of the waiting-room, listening to the Voice. The door was closed; he could not see her. He took a step forward and then stopped. He had remembered his promise. He felt a bit dizzy, and put his hand to his head, then stretched out his arms toward the door which his sense of honor forbade him to open. She was so near, and yet he must not see her; so near, yet he must hide himself from her sight. With a moan of grief he crossed the entry into the office, and shut the door. He sank into the chair before the desk, and buried his face in his hands. He sat thus, like one in a dream, until he heard her step in the hall, and heard the street door close behind her. His impulse was to look after her, but the rigid Puritan conscience forbade him. Instead, he went out into the back room, catching

the fragrance of her violets, and seeing the chair where she had sat drawn up beside the cot. He seated himself mechanically in the place she had just vacated, and there La Signorina found him when she entered a little later.

It was like an open book to her. She saw the flowers, and the man by the bedside. She placed the violets in his hand, and looked into his eyes with a sympathy which he could not mistake. Neither spoke, yet from that instant each understood the other perfectly.

CHAPTER XV

A WORD OF WARNING

Spring came to the old hill as well as to the more favored neighborhoods. First the sky grew very tender and the cold, steel-blue tones went out of the waters of the harbor. Then, as the sun mounted higher, and the days grew long and mild, the grass in the burial ground awoke and the tree tops turned a tender green. Soft airs drifted across the city like the breath of a new hope, and early one morning the liquid notes of a robin sounded from the green arches of the graveyard elms. Burroughs, listening, wondered what had inspired this little wayfarer on chartless skies to pause and sing above those ancient graves his song of nature and eternal springtime.

Burroughs found himself encouraged as he listened, for it is hard to be down-hearted when every breeze whispers "Arise! Rejoice!" and the world-old miracle of nature's triumph over death is being performed before one's very eyes. Burroughs took heart. Perhaps matters would im-

prove. Certainly great changes lay before him, for he was entering the last month of his medical course and the future, although unknown, held possibilities of vital import. He was already looking about him for a professional opening.

One evening as he was listening to one of Miss Cutter's tirades he saw Raymond coming up the hill.

"It 's a long time since you 've scraped on the blinds, Walter," Burroughs said in greeting.

Raymond drew his walking stick down the shutters of the office window. It was an old signal between the friends.

"Yes," he replied, "and to-night it is of no use to do it, for the shutters are not drawn and you are not in the office. Phil, old boy! It 's good to see you. I 've been a perfect heathen to neglect you so."

Then catching sight of Miss Cutter in her doorway, he added, "Hello! There 's that funny old woman. Do you suppose she would let me snap my camera at her sometime?"

"I 'll ask her," said Burroughs.

"My fortygraf!" exclaimed Miss Cutter. "Wal, mebbe I might ef you 'll stand up 'longside er me, dar-tory; this way. There! how 'd that do?" she added, addressing Raymond.

"Finely. I wish I had my camera here now."

Miss Cutter slipped her arm through Burroughs's and executed a few sprightly steps.

"There!" she exclaimed, tossing her head, "Look at us now. Arm in arm, arm in arm! Ain't we a fine lookin' couple?"

Raymond was very sure that they were, and disentangling themselves from Miss Cutter's society as soon as they could, the two went off for a sherbet at Pastorelli's and a stroll through the streets, boisterous with light-hearted mirth and overflowing with picturesque life. When Burroughs had been kissed by Pastorelli's wife and Raymond had fed peanuts to Giorgio, they sat down at the little marble-topped table behind the screen. Pastorelli's wife brought the sherbet from the refrigerator, patted them upon their shoulders and murmured, "Nice-a, nice-a," with her usual eloquence of smile and gesture. But instead of leaving them to themselves, she stopped hesitantly and looked at Burroughs as if wishing to say something, yet not knowing how to begin.

"What is it?" asked the interne.

"Know-a Scarabin'? Yes-a?" she whispered.

"Yes," Burroughs replied.

"Tek-a much-a care-a, dottore," she went on, whispering still.

"Why?" queried Burroughs.

"'Sh! 'sh!" she continued, holding up a warning hand. "Scarabin' no like-a dottore. 'Sh! 'sh!"

"I'm not afraid of Scarabini," laughed Burroughs.

But Pastorelli's wife continued to utter occasional notes of warning as the two men ate their sherbet, and when they went out of the shop Raymond said, —

"I warned you long ago against Scarabini. He is certainly dangerous."

"I'm not afraid of him. He is a bully, and bullies are always cowards."

"Not always."

"Ugh!" exclaimed Burroughs, "one would think we were living in the dark ages. That sherbet must have gone to your head, Raymond. It is perfectly safe down here for an American. It is only the Dagoes who go out on the streets by night and settle their differences with the stiletto."

"But that woman seemed to have a pretty definite idea in her mind," persisted Raymond.

"Oh, she's a susceptible creature. Her notions have no value."

Raymond let the subject drop, and the two men

wandered along the streets peeping in the shop windows, pricing the squids and eels exposed for sale on handcarts, and pausing now and then to talk with some smiling retainer of the dispensary. Burroughs was especially anxious that Raymond should see Mikey. Mikey was his prize baby, for he had pulled him through many trying experiences. It had been the unfortunate baby's lot to suffer many things during his brief sojourn in this vale of tears. One time, as Burroughs explained to Raymond, the parents of Mikey had brought him to St. Luke's in an unconscious condition. Burroughs would not have known how to prescribe had it not been for La Signorina, who was well versed in the mysteries of Sicilian child-culture. She had at once charged the parents with having drugged their baby. No; no! Heaven itself should hear them declare their innocence. But she had persisted and they at length confessed that they had fed Mikey with whiskey to make him sleep so that they could attend a funeral and ride in the procession.

The young men found Mikey playing in the gutter in front of his humble home. He was about two years old and had a small, shrunken body and a heavy head covered with tangled, curly hair. He wore a single short garment and his rickety little

legs were black with the mud of the street. When an older brother saw the men gazing at Mikey, he rushed out and carried the top-heavy baby into the house, scowling savagely at the inquisitive Americans. The mother, looking out of the window, saw this incident and hurried downstairs. She met the boy with his burden half way up and took Mikey in her arms, administering a slap to the older child which was distinctly audible on the sidewalk. Then she came out to greet *il dottore*, smiling and bowing, with Mikey on her arm.

Burroughs's knowledge of Italian was restricted to a few phrases of dialect, which greatly distressed La Signorina. He called all babies "bambino" regardless of sex, and he knew the words for spoon, glass of water and a few other objects frequently employed in his professional duties. He considered Mikey's mother a good subject for practice, and so he repeated all the phrases he knew, to her great interest but small enlightenment. So pleased was she by his attentions that when Burroughs turned to go, she bade Mikey "Shek a day-day to dottore," adding, with sweet persuasiveness, "Kees-a dottore," a suggestion which Mikey was so quick to act upon that, before Burroughs realized what was going to happen, Mikey had stuck out his tongue and lapped the student's face. Mikey's

mouth was full of molasses taffy. Burroughs jumped back when it was too late and the mother held up her darling to Raymond.

" Kees-a, kees-a," she said, sweetly.

" Don't disturb the little one, madam," Raymond exclaimed, as he dodged and both men beat a hasty retreat.

When Burroughs had wiped the molasses from his face and Raymond had stopped laughing at him, the latter said, —

" No more Mikeys to-night, if you please. Let 's go down on the terraces."

As they walked thither a young man beckoned Burroughs aside and held him in conversation for a few moments. When the student rejoined his friend he said, —

" Do you remember that 'heart' case I had in the winter? That fellow who spoke to me just now is a cousin of Barone, the lover. He says Barone is coming to town next Thursday to hear his sweetheart, Celestia Carmanti, sing at the opera house."

" Oh, I know about her — I heard her sing at Mrs. Stebbins's tea in January. She 's a pretty girl and she has a superb voice. I did n't realize that she was the lovelorn damsel you told me about. It's a shame," he went on, after a mo-

ment's thought, "that a pretty girl like her can't marry the man she wants to. Such cases are always sad."

Some children on the terraces were playing "London Bridge," under an electric light, and Burroughs and Raymond seated themselves on a neighboring settee to watch the game. They were amused to find that the old rhyme had been revised and that instead of being ordered off to prison it was

> "Down to the Island you must go,
> My fair lady, oh!"

Thus were the children's games tinged by their surroundings. When the game was over and the children were picking up the moths that had met death in the enticing glare of the arc-lamp, Raymond said, —

"I can't keep that pretty little Italian girl out of my mind. I wish I could do something for her."

"The best thing you could do for Celestia would be to interest some rich woman in her; some one who would send her to Europe for a year's study."

"Would such a glittering prospect soften the heart of Carmanti *padre?*"

"So that he would 'let marry Celestia the good Barone,' as La Signorina says? No, I do not

think so. I am inclined to believe that the Angel Gabriel himself would not be good enough for Celestia if she were patronized by the uptown people."

"But I want to help her marry Barone," urged Raymond. "I believe I will elope with her — acting as Barone's deputy, of course."

"You'd better not," laughed Burroughs. "You would get into trouble."

"I'm not so sure of that. Now, if I came like a serenader under her window some night, don't you suppose that she would jump out and run away with me? — to Barone, you understand?"

"That sounds like What 's-his-name in the Merchant of Venice."

"It does a little, and the setting is quite Italian, although the canals and gondoliers are lacking. Jove! What a lark it would be! I'd like to do it."

"You take care. Don't get mixed up in any Italian scrapes. But of course you are joking."

"Certainly," laughed Raymond, lightly, as he rose. "Well, I must get me up into the land of conventionalities. I believe there 's twice as much fun to be had down here as there is among us who are trussed up with a hundred rules of etiquette."

"Perhaps so," returned Burroughs. "I don't

quite see the funny side. You are in a better position to judge about the matter than I."

As they went toward the Avenue, Burroughs pointed to a certain tenement house.

"There's where Barone will stop when he comes to town, Thursday. It's where he used to board, and his cousin lives there."

"Does he?" returned Raymond, showing little interest, and Burroughs did not see the suggestion of a smile that flitted over his friend's face as he looked at the building.

CHAPTER XVI

CELESTIA'S ELOPEMENT

Celestia's recital took place at the opera house the following Thursday afternoon.

That evening at eleven o'clock Burroughs yawned over his books, stacked them above his desk, and blew out his lamp. Then he pushed up the window shade, threw up the sash, and put his head out. It was a mild night in May, and the moon was full. The towers of Santa Maria, as elfin as battlements of fairy land, raised crosses of silver upon its neighboring pinnacles. The crude bulk of tenements to right and left was blurred and softened like castles on the hills of sleep. The street lay half in shadow, half in moonlight.

There was a suggestion of far-off music — the tinkle of mandolins, the soft cadenza of guitars. Then a group of serenaders turned the corner and came up the street. They paused before old Pietro's house and stood in the shadow. The velvet pleading of the guitars swelled and died away; the mandolins quivered like a lover's voice,

tremulous with emotion. Burroughs listened in a sort of ecstasy. The hour, the moonlight, the ineffable charm of the music, swept every workaday impulse from his mind. He, the prosaic and unsentimental, fell under the thrall of the music and listened as in a dream. It seemed to him that there were roses — roses and moonlight. . . . Ah! what moonlight! . . . and he was at absolute peace; so happy; so undisturbed. . . . How the music swayed and swooned! . . . Was it music or was it moonlight? . . . And were there roses . . . or were they poppies . . . or was it the perfume of Her breath upon his cheek?

The serenaders played the allegretto movement from the "Poet and Peasant" overture. A late straggler wandered homeward, dragging heavy feet over the pavement; there was the clang of the ferry bell, the rumbling of a cart on the neighboring thoroughfare. Burroughs was conscious of these sounds from the every-day world, but they did not break the spell, they simply intensified it. Then a man 's singing voice drifted in on his dream and he was vaguely conscious of the words:

"Where were there ever lips so soft and sweet as thine?
Two red lips so full and warm, lips as red as wine!
Heaven and earth are moonlight when the day is done;
Give me thy lips, Love, and let us breathe as one!

For hark, i mandolini! Hark, the fairy strain!
While the mellow moonlight falls like summer rain.
All the world is music, all my heart is thine;
Folded in mine arms, Love, drink my soul as wine!
For hark, i mandolini! Hark, the fairy strain!
While the misty moonlight falls like summer rain!"

There was something very familiar in the rapturous tenor voice that floated so pleadingly on the spring air. Burroughs collected himself and began to think. It was certainly Raymond's voice. Some one had once said that Raymond was a perfect moonlight tenor and Burroughs knew it now. Then what his friend had said flashed through his mind.

"I'd like to know," he thought, "if Walter is carrying out that Lorenzo and Jessica plan. I fancy it's a good time for me to be out of sight, for if he is going to run away with Celestia, it will be a bit more comfortable not to have seen him do it."

Burroughs leaned out to draw his shutters. Raymond had ceased singing and the mandolins were tinkling persuasively. Burroughs did not know it, but the air they played was the prelude to the song by which Celestia had won a triumph that afternoon. The interne paused a moment to listen, and he heard the young cantatrice take up the opening notes, —

> "Ogni sera di sotto al mio balcone
> Sento cantare una canson d' amore.
> Piu volte la ripete un bel garzone
> E batter mi sento forte, il cuore."

There was a splendid restraint of rapture in the passionate young voice; the art was almost faultless. The mandolins tinkled vibrantly, a quivering background to the splendid notes, —

> "O! com' è bella quella melodia?
> O! quant' è dolce e quanta m' è gradita?"

The voice rose higher and higher; it was like the soul of a woman melted into music; the moon-flooded night seemed to pause breathless, for the glorious climax.

When it was over, Burroughs drew in his head with a sigh of complete satisfaction. It was the most wonderfully beautiful experience of his life. He stumbled in the darkness through the waiting room to the "back alley," lit his lamp, and made preparations to retire. The room was horribly dingy; the lamp smoked; it needed a new wick. Burroughs felt that his whole life had been prose and spluttering lamps. After he had darkened the room and crawled into bed, he heard the sound of approaching mandolins. He heard subdued voices and footsteps passing the office window. Then the familiar sound of scraping on the shutter

assured him that his friend was passing. He sprang out of bed, but the footsteps did not pause and he crept back again. With many conflicting emotions, he lay listening as the sound of music died away in the distance.

"How happy and care free that fellow is!" he thought. "The whole world is an open door to him. Was Celestia with him, I wonder? If so, I suppose Barone has his wish. I shall know whom to employ when I elope. How happy Barone will be! The old man will forgive them, of course. God! If there was only such luck in store for me! But it's 'Grin and bear it,' I suppose." Then, "You fool! brace up." And last of all, as he drifted into sleep, that cry of longing which never slept within his breast, "Margaret — Margaret — Margaret!"

CHAPTER XVII

THE FEAST OF RECONCILIATION

The next morning old Pietro Carmanti awoke feeling perfectly satisfied with himself, Celestia, and the world at large. He was even well pleased with Barone, for, chancing to be in the city the night before, the young man had called to pay his respects to the family, and had shown by every look and gesture that his love of Celestia was a thing of the past. More than that, when a party of serenaders had honored the daughter by playing beneath her windows, and Celestia had gone into the front room to sing for them, Barone had confessed to Pietro that he recognized his former folly, — knowing now, as he himself expressed it, that he had been as presumptuous as a moth looking at a star.

Pietro lay in bed, mentally counting the money which he knew bulged from a certain old leather pocketbook hidden between the mattresses. On his return from the opera house the previous afternoon, when flushed by pride and the excitement of

the hour, he had bidden all his friends to a feast and dance on the following Sunday afternoon and evening in honor of his daughter. He could well afford to do it. Celestia would wear her beautiful new gown, there would be plenty of good wine, and the ice cream should be ordered from an up-town caterer. Pietro was not a poor man. He could do a good thing for his daughter if he chose. Yes!

When the mother awoke she rose and made the kitchen fire. It did not take long to get breakfast for the two, as they ate bread and cheese, and drank tea. But when Celestia, who would sleep late that morning, was ready for her breakfast, she must have a chop, a soft boiled egg, and plenty of fresh milk. There was time enough to prepare that when she woke. The concert had been the greatest event of their lives, and the father and mother could talk of nothing but the beautiful costumes of the ladies, the splendors of the opera house, and the heavenly manner in which their darling had sung. As time went by, Celestia's mother began to grow restless.

"I wish that my sweet pet would wake," she said. "There are so many things to ask. How think you all those player-men knew so well the difficult songs?"

"Celestia did tell them, I think," said Pietro. "I saw her look at the head man when first she came out."

"Was it not most wonderful! She looked at him as if she were a countess, and he was to take her commands. And he such a fine gentleman! Ah, it is a great lady our Celestia will be some day."

"Yes. When I did see her so beautiful and so smiling, and all the gentlemen so carefully playing for her, 'Ah!' I thought, 'it is to one of those player-men I would like to marry Celestia!'"

"Which one did you like best?" asked the mother, eagerly, her face suffused with a look of maternal pride.

"I know not surely, but I think the one with the great brass horn that went over the head and had so large a mouth."

"Ah! But I liked better the man at the end who played many things — the drums, the bells, and I know not what else."

"Yes, perhaps," the father assented, thoughtfully, "but we need not decide in haste. Still, I like best the great brass horn."

The mother grew impatient. She tiptoed to the door of her daughter's room and opened it carefully.

"One peep I must have," she whispered, "to see if my darling sleeps well."

She put her head in at the door and looked toward the bed. There was no one in it. Seized by a sudden trembling she stepped into the room. It was in its usual order. The shutters were closed; the shades were drawn. In the half light she could see Celestia's white gown spread upon the chairs where she had left it the night before, and the little satin shoes were on the dressing case. Nothing seemed changed excepting that the lamp in front of the Virgin's picture had gone out, and that the rosary was missing from the prie-dieu.

The mother's cry brought Pietro to the spot. He saw the untouched bed, and groaned. A door led from the room to the public hall of the house. This door was kept carefully bolted. Pietro examined it and found that the bolt was drawn. Celestia was gone; whether of her own accord or on compulsion he could not be sure. There was no sign of a struggle, and it seemed probable that she had left the house voluntarily. But with whom had she gone? Pietro thought of Barone at once. It could not be he, for he had taken Pietro out for a sherbet at the end of his call. When did she go? She was in the house at

eleven o'clock, for it was after that hour when she sang for the serenaders. Mystery of mysteries! Pietro ran to the tenements upstairs, calling out in his frenzy to know if she were there. The women above stairs caught up their babies and hurried down to the sidewalk, where Pietro's wife was spreading the dreadful news at the top of her voice. Every one talked at once; every one had a different theory; every one offered an impracticable suggestion. To cap the climax, Pastore's old dog contributed his mite to the general hubbub by lifting up his voice in a series of prolonged, though wind-broken howls.

At that moment a woman in an upper window of a neighboring house cried, "See!" and pointed down the street. Every one looked, and what appeared to their astonished gaze but the figures of Celestia and Barone, advancing arm in arm with an air of serenity which was the complete antithesis of the excitement on the hill. When the mother saw them she uttered a cry of delight, ran down the street, and caught her daughter in her arms. Barone smiled indulgently at the demonstration, and laughing and crying by turns, Pietro's wife led them up the hill. The people advanced to meet them. Barone carried his head very high, but Celestia smiled shyly, and looked down as her

mother pushed aside the curious neighbors, announcing the while that the two were married, and that she for one was perfectly satisfied.

Pietro had hung back. He could not decide what rôle to assume. If Celestia were truly married, perhaps it would be better to accept the fact gracefully than to let the crowd know that he, the astute, had been checkmated. He could not imagine how Barone had fooled him, but time would reveal that. Seeing that he made no advances, Celestia went to him and held up her lips. There was a hint of tears in her eyes.

"My good daddy will forgive his little girl, and kiss her on her wedding morning?" she murmured.

What could old Pietro do?

The four went into the house, closing the door upon their clamorous neighbors. Then Barone told his story. The plan had been made by a friend of his — there was no need to tell the name. Barone had simply followed directions. It had been his part to engage the father's attention while his friend and a party of students had serenaded Celestia under her windows. Why had he been chosen to detain Pietro? How could he tell? He had not planned it. It gave an added spice of excitement to the elopement, he supposed. When

Celestia's song was ended she had wrapped herself in a shawl, slipped quietly from her room, and gone with the serenaders. Whither? To the house of a sympathetic aunt four blocks distant. Then, lest Pietro should wonder that Celestia did not return to the kitchen to say good-night before retiring, Barone had taken him out for a sherbet. The mother was already in bed; she thought nothing. Then Barone had gone to his lodging place for the night, and that morning he had called for Celestia and taken her to the City Hall, where they had been married. See! Here was the certificate. And would the good father forgive Barone? The good father was not quite sure whether he would or not. It was very hard for him to swallow his pride; to own himself and his fine plans defeated. As he hesitated Celestia put her arm around his neck.

"See, Daddy," she said, persuasively, "this is the present which my sweet Salvatore has given me."

It was a gold watch with a long, richly chased chain. Pietro never knew it, but Raymond's money, and not Barone's, had paid for the pretty gift. Pietro fixed his black eyes upon the watch. "This Barone is not so bad a fellow," he thought.

Then Salvatore began to boast. He drew a

wonderful picture of his recent financial success; spoke of the prominence he had attained in the local society of the "Sons of Italy" in his new home; told of the grand ball he had opened on Shrove Tuesday evening; hinted at the suite of rooms he had fitted up for his bride, and ended by nonchalantly exhibiting a bank note, announcing with a shrug that it was nothing at all — enough, perhaps, to buy a piano for Celestia, nothing more. And would the kind father forgive him, and accept him as a son-in-law?

What could old Pietro do?

It was soon noised abroad that the party on Sunday afternoon would take the form of a wedding celebration. The festivities were to be conducted upon a most lavish scale, and Burroughs and Raymond were invited.

"Now," said La Signorina, "do you not wish you had taken pain to learn my language? What you will do when all talk Italian and you can understand nothing?"

"I can say something, anyway," laughed Burroughs. "I can say, 'Com star' to the bride, and if any one says it to me, I know enough to answer."

"Yes; and what you will say do sound like 'benny grat*soo*.' Why you will talk dialect?

Why you will not say, 'Come sta' and 'Bene, grazie,' like gentleman?"

Burroughs laughed, and said that the kind of people he had to talk to seemed to understand him, and that was all he cared.

"I feel positively nervous," said Raymond the following Sunday, as they approached the house of feasting. "I am afraid I shall make some awful break."

"You!" laughed Burroughs.

"Yes. We are distinguished guests, and if we should do anything contrary to custom it would make Celestia feel dreadfully. I am not up in the etiquette of this particular circle."

"Neither am I," replied Burroughs. "We can only keep our eyes open and trust to luck."

"And for mercy's sake, don't try to get off any of your mongrel Italian."

"What do you take me for?" returned Burroughs in disgust.

The rooms were overflowing with people. Every one was in the best of humor and there was much laughter and the music of a mandolin and guitar orchestra. The entrance of the two young men caused quite a flurry of excitement. A whisper went through the rooms that these were two of the men who had helped in the elopement. Barone had

admitted that his assistants were not of his own nationality, and deductions were easy to make. Handsome Raymond towered above the majority of the guests, and when he gallantly kissed the bride, a dozen pretty Italian girls fell in love with him. Celestia, the warm blood pulsing beneath the olive brown of her cheeks, received the congratulations of her friends with a proper diffidence, exhibiting her new watch and chain and telling every one that she was perfectly happy. Barone was practically speechless with joy, and Pietro and his wife beamed with a complacency augmented by the thought of the big bank note and Salvatore's social triumphs at the Mardi Gras ball.

Somebody with a deep bass voice sang a solo accompanied by the guitars. It was evidently a comic song, for there was much applause and laughter.

"I wonder what it's about," said Raymond. "Imagine being the only people in the room who cannot understand! I feel as if I were a thousand miles from home."

Cake and ice cream were being constantly passed among the guests, and Burroughs and his friend were well supplied. They toasted the bride in tiny bumpers of something so strong that it set them choking and spluttering in most ignominious

confusion. Everybody laughed good-naturedly, and that was the only breach of etiquette of which the two Americans were guilty.

In the midst of the jollity, Scarabini entered. He came in quietly, spoke to Pietro and his wife, and then went over to the bridal couple. Barone shook hands good-naturedly. He could afford to be magnanimous to his former rival, since he had won the prize. But when Scarabini extended his hand to Celestia, she drew back and looked at him coldly without speaking.

"Diavolo!" exclaimed Scarabini, under his breath.

As he turned away, he met Burroughs's steady, disconcerting gaze. The interne had witnessed the little episode and there was an exultant gleam in his eyes. For an instant the two men looked at each other. Then Scarabini dropped his eyes and made his way out of the room. From that hour he abandoned himself to a single thought, which was destined to eat into his soul until there was no rest for him on earth or in heaven.

When the dancing began, Barone led off with his wife, and other couples followed. Then Uncle Tommaso danced with the bride and every one else formed a circle around the edge of the room to watch them. Uncle Tommaso was a man of ample

proportions, but he footed it bravely, and little Celestia never looked more dainty than when she swung around the room in his panting embrace. Soon after, Burroughs and Raymond made their adieus and withdrew. They went over to the burying ground and sat in the soft twilight listening to the music and laughter which issued from Pietro's house.

"'Well, the gods give us joy!'" quoted Raymond, and then they sat in silence, each busied with his own thoughts. Their musings were dissimilar, yet emanating from the same group of suggestions. Neither dared trust himself to speak for a time, but at length Burroughs said with a sigh only half suppressed, —

"And all things come to him who waits."

"Yes?" questioned his friend. "Do you believe that? You forget that Barone did not wait."

And Burroughs answered, as if unconscious that he spoke aloud, — "You must not tempt me."

"Now what in the world does he mean by that?" thought the young doctor to himself.

CHAPTER XVIII

A MEETING OF THE LADY-BOARD

One morning Miss Cutter showed unusual signs of activity. Before the majority of Spring Hill people were astir she was throwing dipperfuls of water on her sidewalk and sweeping it vigorously. Then she washed her sitting-room window, and a little later, arrayed in her Sunday cap and best lawn apron, she stood in her doorway waiting for La Signorina.

"Good-mornin'," she said when the nurse appeared. "It 's a fine day for the Lady-board, ain't it?"

"Yes, I t'ink," said La Signorina.

"I s'pose they 've got a great lot er new notions sence the last meetin' and air castles enough ter fill up the hull er Spring Hill. I 'll hev a fine time talkin' ter 'em. There 'll be Miss Marvin, most likely a-ridin' her wheel-thing, 'n' old lady Stebbins come in her kerri'ge with that there stuck-up coachman, 'n' Miss Henrietta Terrell will ad-vance with that delicate walk er hers, ez ef she

was steppin' on eggs. Ef I weighed two hundred 'n' fifty I would n't try ter make folks think I was light on my feet. She puts 'em down ser soft 'n' ser easy; looks 's ef she had corns."

"Miss Cutt', Miss Cutt'," laughed the nurse, "why you say all so bad of Miss Terr'l? She is all right."

"Yer mean she thinks she 's all right," cackled Miss Cutter. "They all think they 're all right, but it 's air castles, air castles, air castles!"

The first of the committee to arrive was Miss Marvin. As Miss Cutter had predicted, she came on her bicycle. Miss Cutter went out to greet her.

"Good-mornin', Miss Marvin," she said, subduing her voice to what she considered a genteel conversational tone. "So yer still a-ridin' that there monkey thing?"

"How do you do, Miss Cutter? Yes, I still ride my bicycle."

"Wal, I should n't think yer 'd do it. Ladies did n't do sech things when I wuz young."

"When you were young, Miss Cutter!" exclaimed Miss Marvin with a fine show of surprise. "Why, you 're young now, are n't you?"

Miss Cutter chuckled in self-satisfaction.

"Wal, I ain't ser old ez I might be," she re-

plied. "But 's I wuz sayin', we did n't ride none er them things in those days. When I wuz — younger than I be now — we rode a-horseback, 'n' the horses had nice, long tails a-droopin' behind, and we wore sweepin' habits 'n' looked like ladies. But them monkey things! I would n't git on to one uv 'em fer nothin'."

"Would n't you?" laughed Miss Marvin. "I believe you would if you had a chance. I would n't dare to leave my wheel down here overnight for fear you would be out here practicing on it after dark."

Miss Cutter was easily flattered, and any implication that she was sprightly pleased her very well.

"Wal, now," she chuckled, "I be kinder spry fer one er my years. The dar-tory says ter me th' other day, 'Miss Cutter,' he says, 'yer younger 'n I be.' That 's when I chased them young Eye-talians away from my ash barr'l. Oh, them Eye-talians plagues me so! But here comes Miss Henrietta Terrell, a-walkin' like a young rooster on ice. Thinks she 's light on her feet. Ha! ha! ha! Guess I 'd better go inside. I always sass Miss Terrell."

Only once more did Miss Cutter encounter the managers of St. Luke's as they gathered that morning for their meeting. One of the ladies was especially interested in introducing missionary

methods into the work of the dispensary, and Miss Cutter, having become aware of the fact in some mysterious way, lost no opportunity of ridiculing the idea.

"Hi, there, Mis' Lawrence!" she called. "What d' yer s'pose happened ter the office yesterday afternoon?"

Mrs. Lawrence stopped with a look of resignation upon her face. She had known Miss Cutter for several years, but she never felt quite sure what the old woman would say next.

"Well?" she asked, patiently.

"What should it be but that there singin' woman from the mission! First I knew, two young fellers come a-luggin 'a leetle, weenty organ up the hill 'n' then the singin' woman come in her be-u-tiful trailin' robes 'n' that want-ter-be-an-angel face er hers. 'N' she sung ter them Eye-talians! I went along ter hear."

"Did you?"

"Yes, 'n' 's I stood there, I thought a lot. I thinks, thinks I, 'What good 's that singin' goin' ter do them heathen?' 'N' then I thought it over. I 've got a real sore toe; hurts worse sometimes than others. But when I was a-listenin' ter that there mission woman 'n' she sung higher 'n' higher, I kep' a-risin' 'n' a-risin' higher on to my toes" —

she suited action to her words and her voice soared into the upper register — " 'n' by 'n' by I clean fergot all 'bout my sore toe."

" That was a good thing," said Mrs. Lawrence, smiling in spite of herself.

" 'N' then," went on Miss Cutter, " I knew what good that singin' woman did. She made them Eye-talians fergit their aches 'n' pains. Only," she added, facetiously poking her listener with her long finger, " 'only,' thinks I ter myself, 'she'll spoil the dar-tory's business.' Ha! ha! ha!"

" Did you ever know a queerer woman than that Miss Cutter?" asked Mrs. Lawrence, as she entered the dispensary.

" Never," said Miss Marvin. " What has she been saying now?"

" Nothing worth repeating. What she says seldom amounts to anything. It is the way she says it."

" She told me one day that she supposed the fees of the dispensary went a good ways toward paying the wages of what she termed my 'stuck-up' coachman," said Mrs. Stebbins.

" She always says kind things to me," purred Miss Terrell. " She looked out one day, and when she saw me, she exclaimed, 'How tall! And how spry!' "

Miss Marvin turned away to hide her smile. She could imagine just how Miss Cutter said it.

"I wonder what she would have been if she had not lived this solitary life among foreigners," said Mrs. Lawrence.

"You might as well wonder what effect the kindergarten would have had upon the Artful Dodger," laughed Miss Marvin. "Miss Cutter is what she is, and I cannot possibly imagine her otherwise."

When the ladies had made their monthly inspection of the office and waiting room, they took up the business of the morning. The chief feature was the consideration of a plan to offer Burroughs a permanent position at the dispensary after he was graduated from the medical school.

"I say yes," said Miss Marvin, in the general discussion. "One of the hindrances to successful work here has been that we have had a frequent change of internes. If we can offer Mr. Burroughs an adequate salary, I should certainly advise that we make an effort to retain him."

"So far as I can learn," said Mrs. Lawrence, "his work has been conscientious and successful."

"Oh, there is not the slightest doubt of that," exclaimed Miss Terrell. "I have frequently accompanied Mr. Burroughs on his professional

visits, and he has great judgment and kindness. I could not do better with those people myself."

"I do not believe you could!" mused Miss Marvin, communing with herself.

Miss Terrell uttered a reminiscent laugh.

"Do you know," she said, with up-tilted eye, and a smile which was supposed to be very coy, "one of the Italian women thought that I was Mr. Burroughs's wife, and the strange part of it was, he did not seem to mind."

Nobody replied.

"The strange part of it was," repeated Miss Terrell, "that Mr. Burroughs did not seem to mind at all."

"Madame president!" said Miss Marvin, sharply, "I move you that we stick to the subject in hand."

Miss Terrell cast a quick, spiteful look at Miss Marvin, but said nothing more.

"I have felt all the year," said Mrs. Stebbins from the chair, "that Mr. Burroughs is thoroughly reliable. I have had the feeling that if I made a request it would be carried out, whether I came down here to look after the matter or not. It is worth several hundred dollars a year to have such a man in charge of the work."

"Doctor Hereford, at the medical school, says

that Mr. Burroughs is very careful in his practice; is always willing to take advice, and to call for aid when he feels in doubt. Medical students are not always like that." Miss Grant said this, and her words had weight, for she was a large contributor to the support of the dispensary.

"And best of all," went on Miss Marvin, "the people are fond of him. We need to look in the squalid homes about here to learn Mr. Burroughs's true worth. Have you talked with La Signorina?"

"I have done so," said Miss Grant. "Her testimony showed me conclusively that we ought to retain Mr. Burroughs if possible."

"Can we be sure that La Signorina's word is reliable?" Miss Terrell spoke in a smooth, soft voice, which nevertheless impressed her hearers as being vindictive. "Italian women are very impressionable, you remember."

"Change in the wind," mentally commented Miss Marvin, while Miss Grant replied with much feeling, —

"I trust La Signorina absolutely. Her devotion to her people makes her estimate of a co-worker unimpeachable."

"Ah!" said Miss Terrell, sweetly.

The matter was discussed long and earnestly, and the result of the conference was that Bur-

roughs was invited to become resident physician at St. Luke's on a definite salary. He was surprised when he heard of the decision, and was naturally very much pleased that the ladies should wish to retain his services. But his thoughts were bent upon a private practice, in what location he had not yet decided.

He had often thought, as he plodded through the familiar district, that when he was gone he would miss the old hill with its picturesque life and varied associations. Now when the opportunity to remain was given him, he could scarcely resist the temptation to accept it. Yet he felt that he owed it to himself to put the result of his long struggle to some different, perhaps wider use. Then, too, he had a hope which he knew he must not entertain if he stayed in the dirt and noise of Spring Hill. He talked the matter over with La Signorina. The work of St. Luke's was her hobby, and she mounted and galloped away. Her enthusiasm was contagious, and for a time Burroughs yielded to it. Before making a final decision, however, he resolved to consult Doctor Raymond.

CHAPTER XIX

THE DREAM OF A HOME

"Do not decide until you have seen the place I've picked out for you," was Raymond's advice when Burroughs told him of the proposition the Board of Managers had made. "The ladies have given you a week in which to consider, have n't they? Arrange with somebody at the school to take your clinic day after to-morrow, and we will go out and look over the ground."

The necessary substitute was secured, and Raymond boarded the trolley car with his friend in most exuberant spirits. They sat on the front seat like eager children. It was a two-hour ride to their destination, and the way ran by fields and woods, valleys and hillsides. Fruit orchards in full bloom scented the air with their perfume; there was a haze in the air that made the distant green look blue; there was sunlight through the haze that glinted like gold dust.

> "At Greenleigh when the apple-trees
> Fling all their sweetness to the breeze,

The birds sing high, the birds sing low,
Nestling where the lilacs grow,
And I shall see my love, I know —
At Greenleigh in the Springtime," —

softly sang Raymond in his friend's ear as they sped along.

Burroughs sat alert with an eager look of expectancy in his face; the look of a man who finds a long cherished dream coming true, yet who fears lest he shall awake before the vision is fulfilled.

Now and then they waited at a turnout for another car. As a rule these sidetracks are located in uninteresting places; against sand-banks perhaps, or opposite barnyards and pigsties. In this case, however, the two men beheld visions of meadows, farmers at the plough or birds building their nests on apple-trees beyond the stone walls.

"I declare, Burroughs, you 've grown young since we started!" exclaimed Raymond. "Those anxious wrinkles have all gone and you look more as you did when I first met you in your freshman year."

"That 's because I 'm getting some good oxygen into my lungs," explained the interne.

"To tell you the truth, old man," continued Raymond, "you 've been looking very thin lately and need a change. You 've been wonderfully

good to those Dagoes and have done a great amount of night study. You would not be able to keep on burning the candle at both ends much longer. It 's lucky your school work is over."

Burroughs heaved a deep sigh.

"You may be sure I 'm glad. It has been a long pull. It is what I 've worked for since I was fifteen years old, but if you and some of the others had n't stood by me, I am not sure that I should ever have made the run."

Raymond turned a look of tender regard upon his friend. He was very fond of this quiet persevering man who had overcome so many difficulties, yet who never boasted of his triumphs. He often wanted to say pleasant things to Burroughs, but there was a certain dignity about the younger man at such times that made Raymond's words of praise sound like empty flattery, and he usually broke down in the middle of his adulations. To-day he seemed better able to choose his words and they rang true.

"You 've been very plucky," he said. "I envy you your courage. You deserve the softest berth that we can find for you. Wait till we have climbed three or four more hills and see what I have to show you."

The car sped on, crossing brooks, pulling more

slowly up the green edges of hillside pastures, sweeping through cool, dim vistas of balsam groves until at length it emerged upon an airy upland overlooking a green plain.

"Look down there, old man," said Raymond, joyously.

Burroughs looked.

The long, white road ran down before him, past prosperous farmhouses and ample barns. Beyond, the white spire of a country church rose from clustering roofs and feathery treetops. A broad, still stream wound through the valley, — a silver ribbon in the foreground, a glint in the meadows beyond the village, — and as the car descended the hill and approached the town, Burroughs could see reeds on the river bank blowing in the wind, and quick dartings of swallows among old-fashioned chimneys.

"Will this do?" asked Raymond, softly.

Burroughs did not speak, but the eyes he turned to meet his friend's gaze shone with an unwonted moisture.

They entered the village street with much clamor of the car gong. Pink-faced children waved their hands from sunny dooryards — clean children, who looked as if they had plenty of good food to eat. There were sleek dogs with shining collars which

paced to and fro demurely in well-fed content. Pretty young women were planting geraniums in neat gardens. Honest-faced men were driving fat ponies leisurely up and down the elm-arched street. At the church green they left the car and Burroughs looked about him in delight.

"It was good of you to look this up, Walter," he said.

There was a block of shops with the post-office in the centre; there was a good school-house and a town hall. In the centre of the green was a band-stand, and beyond the parsonage Burroughs saw a little library building of gray stone. The industries of the town were south of the main street, Raymond said, near the railroad station, and consisted of two factories and a grist mill. Excepting the factory owners and their employees, the people of the town were well-to-do farmers.

"Now first of all we must have some dinner," said Raymond, "then we will go to see the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick maker, and do a little feeling round. Hi! hi!" he added, merrily, quoting Miss Cutter, "is there anything the matter with this? And it's all for you, Phil, free-gratis, for nothing. No practice to buy out, no rival to contend with. All you'll have to do is to hang out your shingle and prove your merit."

After a hearty country dinner, Burroughs sat in a huge rush rocker on the hotel piazza, while Raymond went to hire a horse and carriage for their afternoon jaunt. It was a little after twelve and the sun-flecked street was practically deserted. Three or four men hurried by on bicycles; a plump boy in overalls rode an old white horse over to the watering-trough and worked his small body up and down in unison with the squeaking pump-handle. When his steed had quenched its thirst, the boy disentangled himself from the pump handle and rode off under the shadow of the elms. Then a drowsy restfulness fell over Burroughs's spirits; every nerve and muscle seemed to relax. The church door stood open and some one within was playing the "Priests' March" very softly on the organ; a ground-sparrow was building her nest beside the hotel porch. Surely, this was the place Burroughs had seen in his day dreams and the vision would come true at last.

The two men studied the situation very thoroughly that afternoon, calling upon many of the leading townspeople, viewing the mansions of the prosperous, examining outlying districts. When their research was complete, Raymond said, —

"I have just one thing more to show you. Here it is."

He drew rein before a house in the pleasant neighborhood above the church. It was a little house painted white, with green blinds. A wistaria vine ran riot over the porch and a sturdy rose tree guarded the steps. Two elms stood in the yard at one side and under their boughs there was a glimpse of meadows and a long, undulating line of far blue hills.

"How is this?" asked Raymond. Burroughs could not speak.

The young physician had once told Margaret Worthington that he would put himself to a good deal of trouble in order to see that quiet gleam of joy which came into Burroughs's eyes when he was happy. The look had been there all day and Raymond was satisfied.

"You can rent this house very reasonably," he said. "It is centrally located, as you see, and the neighborhood is all right. That little wing with the side entrance is just the place for your office; I can see the whole thing now: 'P. M. Burroughs, M. D.,' gold letters on a black background, and a lantern on a bracket beside the door for evening use, with 'Doctor Burroughs's Office' painted on the glass."

Still Burroughs did not speak, but his eyes were alight.

"You have some old auntie or somebody, have n't you," queried Raymond, "who would be willing to come here and keep house for you?"

"No; but I suppose a housekeeper would do."

"Just exactly as well. You must have an establishment, for it gives a man so much better footing in a place. You see, the fellow who has just left here lived in lodgings back of his office in the block and took his meals at the Railroad House, opposite the depot. People were a little afraid of him from the first, and when they found him hob-nobbing with the hostlers and playing poker with them, they froze him out so completely that he departed for regions unknown. Now, if you come in here with that dead-in-earnest face of yours and go to housekeeping, you 'll be received with open arms."

"It could not be more attractive," said Burroughs. "I 'll come out as soon as I pass the State examinations."

"And if you need funds to start with, Burroughs, you know on whom to call," said Raymond, earnestly, "and you can take your own time about repaying me."

When the sky was turning gold and the shadows were growing long, the two young men went back to the city by train. Raymond was hilarious,

Burroughs quietly happy. Before the city lights gleamed through the dusk, Raymond had furnished the little white house and had laid low every citizen of the village with some critical illness. Burroughs enjoyed the plans, but he was less intent upon the health statistics of the town than upon a mental picture which had shaped itself as he looked at the cottage Raymond had selected for him. This picture grew momentarily more distinct. Dared he hope that it might some day become a reality? What Burroughs saw was a glimpse of himself advancing cheerily along the elm-bowered street. He carried the inevitable satchel, the badge of his profession. When he reached the house with the wistaria vine he turned in at the gate, quickening his pace, for the house door stood open and the doorway framed a lithe, graceful figure, and a beloved face which smiled a welcome to him. And that and that alone could make home for him.

Raymond took Burroughs home with him for dinner. The doctor's mother was away and the two men dined alone. The substantial elegance of Raymond's cosy library had never appealed to Burroughs more strongly than it did that evening as he lounged in an easy chair and feasted his eyes upon fine pictures and well-filled book shelves.

After dinner the men went into Raymond's office and made careful inventories of books and instruments without which Burroughs could not begin his practice. Then Raymond took out his guitar, and so serene was Burroughs's mood that he permitted his friend to sing "Sweet Rosy O'Grady" and half a dozen more sentimental ditties, ending with the serenade with which he had signaled Celestia on that long-to-be-remembered evening. It was but a short step from serenades to sweethearts.

"Burroughs, you must get married."

"So must you. What about that affair you were talking of last fall?"

"That did not turn out very well, Phil."

"I 'm sorry."

"Oh, it is probably just as well. But I was rather disappointed. However, that has nothing to do with your case. You must get married."

"That 's out of the question."

"No, it is not. Just pick out some nice girl and ask her to marry you. I never saw such a fellow for not caring about girls!"

Burroughs winced. He did not have the nervous habit common to many men of walking up and down, when tired or excited. But now he rose quickly and strode to and fro.

"We 've been pretty close friends, Walter," he

said, pausing before Raymond's chair, "but I 've never told you about Miss Worthington. The second year in the High School, we sat in adjacent seats. I was the butt of considerable ridicule because I was poor. The girls all called me 'that Burroughs thing,' and joked because my collars were threadbare. But," with a sudden burst of energy, "they were clean; my mother saw to that. I was growing very fast then, and my arms and legs stuck out beyond my clothes several inches too far for elegance. I had only one suit. I shall never forget it. It had been brown, but was faded to a dirty yellow. Among other tasks I worked in a grocery store out of school hours, and sometimes I tore my clothes on cases and barrels, so that before the winter was over the suit looked pretty bad in spite of all my mother's mending. Life would have been an absolute burden to me if it had n't been for Margaret. She saw how it cut me to be made sport of, and she took pains to be nice to me. In fact, she loved me. I adored her then and I adore her still. Her feelings toward me have not changed, but she is beyond my reach."

Raymond heard his friend with quickening pulse. By a sudden enlightenment, he understood many things which had not been clear to him before. He remembered with a thrill that handclasp across

Pastorelli's marble-topped table. He understood intuitively the strength of Burroughs's devotion, and his own attachment to Margaret seemed a very feeble thing. With a delicacy born of his affection for his friend he said, —

"Margaret's eyes are very beautiful at all times, but I have noticed that they are never more so than when I am speaking to her of you."

Then after a silence made potent by the current of sympathetic appreciation which needed no expression in words, he said, —

"You could not expect her father to consent to your marriage if you stay at St. Luke's."

"I would never ask her to share such a life with me."

"That 's where the man in you speaks. There are plenty of fellows so self-satisfied that they think any girl ought to be proud to go with them to the Fiji Islands. Now, Burroughs, you 've done some heavy sledding and you must convince yourself that it is over for a long time. You deserve a great deal of happiness. You deserve to have Miss Worthington for your wife and I believe that you can have her. At the end of a year or two, when you are as prosperous as I know you will be, Margaret's father will be proud to have you for a son-in-law. Just believe that. And con-

vince yourself, too, that a girl like Miss Worthington will never give up a thing she has set her heart upon. I know that if she loves you, all the fathers in the world will never hold you apart forever. I shall take occasion to call at the house to-morrow and you may trust me to see that your prospects are fully set forth; not too unctuously, of course, but judiciously. I 'll manage it."

"You 're a trump, Raymond!"

"Oh, no; just an easy-going rascal who never had anything in the world to bother him. Sometimes I wish I had had your scramble. It would have made more of a man of me."

"Never wish that, Walter. That sort of a life puts a hardness into a man that he would give worlds to be rid of. Why, I am so used to work that I don't half know how to play when I have the chance. I envy you a dozen times a day. You are handsome, graceful, light-hearted. It makes people happy just to see you around."

"Your characterization would apply with equal force to a good-natured puppy dog," answered Raymond, lightly. "One thing is sure; there is one person in this city to whom the mere thought of you brings more happiness than a lifetime's association with me could bring. I know this, Phil, because she has refused me."

"My dear Raymond!"

Burroughs went back to St. Luke's that evening with a heart so light that he seemed to be walking on air. Electricians were festooning the church and the square with incandescent lamps preparatory to the carnival to be given the following evening in honor of a visiting bishop. Burroughs took very little notice of the work; he hardly saw the chattering crowds; he did not mind the odors or the dirt; he was no longer a part of the hysterical life of the district. St. Luke's and the poor Italian people were a receding vision. Quiet, decency, normal living, and Margaret; these were before him. He was coming to the end of the long, anxious struggle begun in boyhood. He went to his desk in the office intending to write to the Board declining their offer. Then he decided to wait a day or two, in order to avoid undignified haste. To-morrow he would announce his approaching departure and prepare his clientele for a new interne. Then would come the graduation and State examinations — and then life!

Thus for hours he sat dreaming, while beyond the city's farthest suburb, the little white house with a rose tree at the doorstone awaited his coming, and the village in the river valley slept in quiet under the splendid stars.

CHAPTER XX

THE PLOT IN THE ALLEY

The excitement connected with Celestia's elopement had died away. Barone took his bride to her new home, and through the kindness of friends she secured a good position as soloist in one of the churches. Peace was apparently restored in all quarters. Only Scarabini, working vainly to regain his hold upon the poor people, nursed his grudge against the American doctor. It would have been quite useless for a hundred of Scarabini's countrymen, or even Celestia herself, to attempt to convince the Italian that Burroughs had nothing to do with the elopement. His mind was made up that the interne at St. Luke's had been the chief conspirator, and that all his bad luck, in love as well as in business, came from Burroughs.

One day, on the street where Guido Mascaro lived, Scarabini saw old Bettina, a troop of children at her heels, making her way along the sidewalk. The children were hooting and throwing bits of garbage at her and making taunting ges-

tures. Now and then she turned savagely and struck at them with her lean, brown hand. They would dodge the blows and redouble their jeers. Laughing women leaned out of their windows watching the sport, which lasted until the old woman reached her own doorway. Then she turned and faced the impudent youngsters, shrieking maledictions and threatening to tear their eyes out if they came any nearer.

"What is the matter with that old woman?" Scarabini inquired of a young fellow who stood smoking at the door of his shop.

"Oh, she tells fortunes and they no longer come true. She told a fortune to my wife last week, and how false it was! They say she has a devil and has lost her power to read the stars because she hates that American doctor, who, as all the world knows, is under the especial protection of the Blessed Virgin."

"That American pig is not beloved by the Virgin," sneered Scarabini. "I know him well. He means not kindness to you people. There is mischief behind his smile."

The grocer shrugged his shoulders.

"I know nothing of that," he said. "I know only that he did save the life of Mascaro's Maria when Bettina's old woman was too drunk to see

straight. I only hear how good was he to Reggerio's Amadeo who fell out of the window — peace to the poor little innocent," and he crossed himself devoutly.

"But he did not save the boy's life," went on Scarabini, vindictively.

"And how could he?" asked the grocer, with asperity. "The poor child fell so far that he was all spoiled inside. Only the blessed saints could have made him live, and they willed otherwise."

"You may be sure they did, when they saw the American at work," growled Scarabini, turning on his heel.

The young grocer watched the ill-tempered Italian as he went down the street. Then with one of the inimitable and very expressive gestures of his race, he said, aloud, —

"Go, my fine gentleman! I know who you are. There are many crosses in the cemetery for which you will sweat in Purgatory. I want neither your medicine nor your fine words!"

In her rage against Burroughs for defeating her when little Guido was born, Bettina had undone herself. In the past she had enjoyed a certain notoriety as a fortune teller, but she had grown so sulky through dwelling on her defeat, that her prognostications lacked their former flavor of op-

timism, and very naturally nobody cared to pay for revelations of a future full of bad luck. Then her friend and ally, La Levatrice, had died under unfavorable conditions. The coroner rendered a verdict of "alcoholism," but the denizens of the street knew that she drank herself to death, and they scorned the big-sounding American word which none of them understood. After that Bettina grew more and more moody. Maria was afraid of her, and would not let her touch the baby. Guido ordered his mother to stay in the shop and leave his wife in peace. Then he would jeer at her relentlessly, now and then shaking in front of her an especially fine bunch of radishes, or an exceptionally long sausage, with the information that he was going to make a present to the American doctor. So Bettina sat by the hour musing on her grievances, muttering incoherently the while, until the report became current that she was possessed of a devil, and scarcely a child save Capotosti's Gracia dared venture inside the shop while she was there. Out in the sunshine it was different. The sun is the child's friend, and in its light he hopes and dares a thousand things. When Bettina went abroad, she ran a gauntlet of ridicule from the children, which she knew only reflected the opinions of the older people.

On the day that Burroughs and Raymond took their trip into the country, Bettina strode swiftly up Spring Hill Street. Her gold earrings, with pendants the size and shape of half-dollar pieces, swayed violently as she stalked along. She was smarting from an encounter with some of her neighbors, and was frantic with rage. Stopping before St. Luke's, she examined the front of the building, her fishy eyes alert with hate. Then she shook her fist at the doorway, and muttered an imprecation. By this time Miss Cutter's head was out of the window. As the interne was away, and La Signorina was making calls, the old woman felt responsible for the welfare of the dispensary.

"Hi, there, you old Dago-woman!" she cried. "What 're yer shakin' yer fist at the dar-tory's house fer?"

Old Bettina stopped, and flashed an angry look at her interrogator. She did not understand English, but Miss Cutter's tone conveyed an entirely obvious meaning.

"You dirty old woman!" she returned, in Sicilian, "mind your own business!"

"I don't understand a word yer say," piped Miss Cutter, " 'n' I don't want ter, neither. But yer 'd better stop a-shakin' yer fist at the dar-tory's house, er I 'll set the cop on to yer."

Then she rushed out to the sidewalk, and continued the battle at shorter range. So fixed a habit was it in the Spring Hill district to thrust the head out of the window, that Raymond, in remarking upon the phenomenon, had once told Burroughs that a stag at gaze would be the proper crest of any family in the region who entertained heraldic aspirations. As the tones of the two old women grew shriller, windows were raised and interested faces were put forth. Some boys, who had played truant from school that day, drew near, charmed by the prospect of a fight, while Brady and his companions came to the graveyard fence and peeped between the bars in great delight. Spring Hill Street was "at gaze." A young man sauntered up the street, and paused on the edge of the circle which surrounded the angry women. Bettina was dancing up and down, shrieking herself purple in the face, while Miss Cutter pranced forward and back, waving her hands in scorn, and crying, —

"I don't understand a word yer say, 'n' I don't want ter, neither."

The newcomer stepped up to her.

"She says," he explained, "that she will break that doctor's neck, if she can get hold of him."

"She will, will she! Wal, she won't. D' yer

hear me, yer old Dago-woman? D' yer hear what I say? He 's too fine er feller fer you ter 's much as lay yer finger on to."

"She says," translated the man, turning to Bettina, "that you are a dirty old dog, too vile to eat the doctor's leavings."

Bettina howled. Then the words spluttered from her thin lips.

"She says," went on the self-appointed interpreter in English, "that the American doctor has made her the laughing stock of her neighbors. No one will buy her herbs or her love-potions."

"'N' it 's mighty good they don't," shrilled Miss Cutter.

"This woman says your nasty old hands would poison the herbs," said the man, turning to Bettina.

There seemed to be danger that the old woman would fall in a fit.

"And," continued this mischief-maker, "she says that the American doctor has told all the people that you are a witch."

"Cheese it, cheese it! — the cop!" cried one of the boys, beginning to run.

The interpreter glanced hastily down the street, and drew out of the crowd. Bettina stopped scolding, and started rapidly for home. By the time

the police officer reached the top of the hill the boys had vanished, Brady and his friends were over on the other side of the burying ground, and not a head was to be seen at any of the windows. Miss Cutter sat in her usual place. She was complacently knitting; her hands were steady, and her brow unruffled.

"Good morning, Miss Cutter," said the policeman, "what 's been the matter up here?"

"Oh, nothin' special, 'xcept an old Dago-woman was lyin' about the doctor, 'n' I went out 'n' told her to go on home."

The officer had hurried up the hill, and was very warm. He removed his helmet deliberately, wiped the band within its rim with his handkerchief, and replaced it upon his head.

"You don't want ter have no trouble with them foreigners, Miss Cutter," he said. "They 're a dangerous lot when they get started."

"Guess I know that," replied Miss Cutter, promptly. "Have n't I lived on this here hill sence long b'fore you wuz born? Can't I remember when there were n't a furriner in the hull district? Why, Lor' sakes! When I moved on this street your folks had n't ser much ez thought er leavin' the dear old Em'rald Isle. Ha! ha! ha! Guess you can't tell me nothin' about furriners.

Good-day ter yer," and she shut the window with a bang.

In every age of the world's history there have been established customs for the termination of interviews and the dismission of guests. Miss Cutter's way was very simple; she merely slammed her window. There were advantages in this method, not the least of which being that it gave the old dame the last word.

The policeman went off in a huff, and for several minutes Miss Cutter chuckled over her own cleverness. Her wrath at Bettina was not appeased, however. The Sicilian woman's insulting conduct to the beloved "dar-tory" rankled in her breast.

"'N' ter have had that runner fer the Spanish doctor hear her, too!" she mused. "They say he 's none too fond er Doctor Burroughs."

When Scarabini was safely off Spring Hill Street, he started after Bettina at a rapid pace, overtaking her opposite a blind alley.

"See!" he said in Sicilian, tapping her on the shoulder. "I have something to say to you."

He drew her into the alley and addressed her with an air of great dignity and authority.

"Now, old woman, I think we are of one mind about that American cub. Can you hold your tongue?"

"Yes, signore," muttered Bettina.

"He has spoiled my trade and made people hate me."

"It is the same with me, signore."

"Therefore I would gladly spoil his pretty face"—

"Spoil his face!" interrupted Bettina, angrily. "Spoil his face! Why is the signore so weak? I would gladly run a knife into him!"

"Perhaps I would, also," said Scarabini, scornfully. "But it does not follow that I will tell to a silly old woman all I have in mind. For ruining my work I would like to cut his nose off. For something else which I will not tell you, I would do more, much more."

"Signore," said Bettina, cringingly, and bending over the young man's hand, "let us work together. See! I kiss your hand. I am your slave. For a long time I have no rest, for all the people hate me and despise my counsels. They come no more to me for horoscopes. I am undone, I am broken-hearted, and it is all because of that American. What shall I do to help you? How shall we be rid of this pest?"

"Now you are talking like a wise woman," said Scarabini, with one of his blandest professional smiles. "We will be friends. Yes! Swear you

will keep silent; swear to me on this," and he pulled a small dagger, double-edged and keen, from its sheath in his pocket.

Bettina took the weapon solemnly and laid the bright blade against her breast.

"I swear by the Holy Mother of God," she said, "by Saint Peter and Saint Paul and by thee, blessed Saint Rosalia of Sicily, that I will hide in my heart all the words of the kind signore. I am at his feet. I am his slave."

"If you fail to keep this promise," said Scarabini, hanging over her, sternly, "may the sharp knife turn its point into your heart."

"May the sharp knife turn its point into my heart," echoed Bettina.

"Good!" exclaimed Scarabini, putting the stiletto into his pocket. "I will see you soon again. And remember! One word of this and they 'll find your skinny old body in the dump heap behind the slaughter house. Go now, and be in haste!"

CHAPTER XXI

AN EAVESDROPPER IN CHINATOWN

It was a little after eight o'clock on the evening of the next day. In the basement of a house in Chinatown two men sat at a table talking earnestly. The room was vaguely lighted by the feeble yellow glow of a dingy lamp, and at first glance appeared to be unoccupied save by the swarthy faced men at the table and by the proprietor of the establishment who crouched near the barred door, watching his guests with slant-eyed craftiness.

A more careful inspection would have shown a pulse-quickening horror at the lower end of the room, where squalid human beings sprawled on dilapidated mattresses in an opium-soaked sleep.

The men at the table were not Americans. The sharp wits of the Chinaman told him that, for they talked a pyrotechnic sort of language very different from that spoken by most of his patrons. They had gleaming black eyes, fierce mustaches, and wore their soft hats recklessly, with a bit of red feather sticking in the band of each. One of the

men was short; the other towered fiercely above the board. They had not called for pipes, nor did they wish to play fan-tan. Glasses of whiskey were all they demanded, and their conversation seemed to interest them more than their drinks, for they sipped leisurely, but talked with an alarming strenuousness.

"To business!" the tall man said in Sicilian.

"Will any overhear us?" asked the short man in the same dialect.

"Who is here that can understand? Not that heathen, yonder. Not those pigs in the corner."

"It is well. Here, then, is the plan. The Count Scarabini — may the Virgin protect him — has long been tormented by a certain vile American doctor. This dog has caused the people to hate our serene count, so that now he can do no business with them. His fortunes are wrecked and his influence is destroyed.

"Moreover, this same cursed one has caused the count to lose his beautiful innamorata, by stealing her from her father's house and marrying her to a filthy Genovese. All this cannot be forgiven. The only hope for our great enterprise lies in the allegiance of the lower classes to our count. The lady he wished to wed sings like an angel, and Signore Scarabini thought to send her to Sicily to

win the favor of those in high places by her heavenly voice. Now all is ruined by that figure of a pig."

"*Peste!*" exclaimed the tall one, bringing his heels down upon the floor with vibrating force.

The sound of a yawn came from the heap of ragged creatures in the dim corner.

"Hush!" whispered the short man, seeming to shrink under the table. "You have wakened some one."

"Craven! who will understand you? Hasten, or I will depart."

"No, I pray you. I was not frightened, but this is serious business."

"Go on with it, then."

"The American doctor is to be made an end of to-night, during the bishop's carnival. An old woman who has also a grudge will send for this pig-faced Yankee and as he passes through a dark street — zzt! You understand. I have offered to do this for the count, but he will have no one do it for him. He will have his vengeance if it costs him his life. It is my part to wait on the avenue with a cab I have hired and our noble Scarabini will ride hither in safety, while his escape will be covered by the insane screams of the women and the running to and fro of the men."

"Is this a safe place?"

"None is safer. The police will not look for an Italian among the China people, and I have money enough to buy that heathen yonder twice or thrice. The count will rest secure until the trains and boats are no longer watched. Then he will go to Italy and we will be left to continue his great and good work."

"Is it well to kill an American? I have been told that they have great detectives and many policemen."

"Now it is you who turns craven! There is nothing safer. With all their boastings, these Americans are but stupid blunderers. It is true, few Italians have carried their quarrels out of their own circles, but few have had so great cause as Scarabini has."

"He has great cause, truly, and as for these Americans, I know but little of them. It is but two days since I landed."

The short man took out his watch.

"The time draws near. I go. Wish for me good fortune and to our count success."

He drained his glass quickly and rose to his feet.

"It is not hard," said the tall man; "one thrust — and good-day!"

The short man hurried to the door.

"Farewell; and the blessed saints protect you and our thrice noble count," said his companion.

"Farewell. The American will be summoned at nine o'clock, and if heaven favor us, all will be over by nine and a quarter."

The Chinaman let him out and the other man sat in meditation. Then another yawn from the mattresses broke the quiet. Somebody rolled over, disentangling himself from the gratuitous embraces of his companions, blinked blindly for a moment, and then staggered to his feet. He was very dizzy and his eyes burned like coals, but his brain was clear enough to have understood the conversation which had been held in a dialect learned years ago in Sicily and made familiar by recent experiences in the Italian quarter. He reeled over to the table, the quivering of his ragged garments revealing how weak he was. The dark-visaged man glowered at him, but he returned the look with a vacuous smile as he dropped into the chair just vacated.

"Good-morning," he said; "this is a fine day."

The man eyed him suspiciously, muttered "No spe'k," and went on sipping his whiskey. The Chinaman drew near, obsequiously, ready to take an order. The newly awakened man called for

liquor and counted out the price. When he had settled his account he had three cents left. He took a vial from the pocket of his dilapidated coat and poured its contents into the glass of whiskey which the Chinaman set before him. The glass shook as he raised it to his lips and drained the mixture with a sort of fierce earnestness. Then he rose and bowed to the Sicilian and to the Chinaman. The latter slid various bolts and bars, opened an inner door of sheet iron and another of stout wood and let him emerge upon the street.

It was dark, and he realized then that it was night and not morning. He had been asleep for thirty-six hours. Against the sky, over on his left, the illuminated face of the clock in a railroad station showed him that it was twenty-five minutes of nine. He was over two miles from the Italian quarter and the only strength he could depend upon was to be gained from the whiskey and cocaine he had just drunk. He staggered along with swimming head, but with rapidly clearing brain. As he proceeded, his step grew steadier. As the time grew shorter his gait became more rapid until, when he reached the business section of the city, he was making good speed toward the Italian district, cutting corners and dodging lamp posts like a man with all his faculties alive. He

was conscious of a thankfulness that the stimulants he had taken were standing him in good stead. He had been a little fearful, for he had eaten almost nothing for several days and had slept only by the use of the opium pipe. It was the only means by which he could secure rest, now.

He was glad, too, as he hurried through the deserted and echoing business streets that so few people were abroad. His errand was an honest one, yet he feared to be detained and questioned. The clock on the Chamber of Commerce chimed nine. If he hurried, he would be on Spring Hill Street in fifteen minutes. He began to run, but soon felt a contraction about the heart, and found that he could hardly breathe. He dropped back into a quick walk, hoping almost against hope that he would not be too late. At length, tenement houses and small shops showed him that he was upon the edge of the Italian district. He began to run again, breathing heavily, yet determined not to check his pace until his goal was won. His way lay through Benediction Alley and across the square of Santa Maria. As he turned into the alley he could see gay Chinese lanterns dancing in the wind at the far end of the dark vista. Then he caught the sound of martial music. His breath was failing him; he began to reel. He was now

so near, and yet must fail! For an instant he leaned against the brick wall of a tenement, trying to compose himself for the final rush across the square.

Suddenly something in front of him caused him to spring forward. Then youth and love, lost dreams and pitiful failures leaped out of the shadowy past and confronted him. For the flashlight of finality made all things plain.

CHAPTER XXII

GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN

IN front of Guido's shop was an arc lamp and everything near it was in high light or dark shadow. The brick tenements sprang out of the darkness with the vivid distinctness of houses on the stage, their window shutters throwing long, sharp shadows, their doorways caverns of inky blackness. Distorted figures of loafing men zig-zagged across the sidewalks and even the curbings cast sharp-cut shadows upon the pavement. The wide door of the shop was open. Within was gloom, save where old Bettina, squatting on the floor in the glare of the street lamp, stood out from the background of shadow like a figure on the canvas of some old Florentine painter. The warm tone of her orange headscarf, the softer folds of her faded brown dress, the glint of her earrings, and the vivid green of the *indivia* she was sorting, completed the color scheme of the picture. Her skinny hands were very deft as she picked over the bunches of salad which would be peddled on the

push-carts next day, and her sharp, restless eyes, while apparently bent unremittingly on her work, missed nothing that was going on upon the street.

The bell of Santa Maria chimed nine. Capotosti's Gracia and five little girls from the next street were playing "Shir-di-lee" in front of the shop, and danced gayly forward and back as their shrill, resonant voices sang —

> "And kiss your sweetheart, shir-di-lee,
> Shir-di-lee, shir-di-lee,
> And kiss your sweetheart, shir-di-lee,
> Upon a frosty morning."

Bettina waited until the game had run its length; then she raised her head and called stridently in Sicilian, —

"Gracia, thou imp, run to the American doctor. Say that the Maria of my Guido is suddenly ill. Go quickly and I will give thee a radish for thy trouble."

Gracia glanced up to see that the old woman was in earnest, and, being satisfied with the genuineness of the offer, she darted off.

"That will bring him," muttered Bettina. "He loves well Maria and the baby."

Then she bent over her work again. A young man wearing a pince-nez stepped out of the shadow. Bettina sprang to her feet.

"Signore," she whispered eagerly, catching him by the arm, "the blessed saints attend you. When you wait in the shadow on the alley, let him pass you. If the chance is good in the dark" — she made a quick and suggestive gesture. "If not, wait till he comes hither. It would be a great joy to me to see him writhe, but it will bring a bad name on our house."

"I know all this!" growled Scarabini. "Let me go, you old hag!" He pulled himself loose from her grasp and started to leave the shop.

"Signore! Signore!" said Bettina in a loud whisper.

Scarabini came back and bent his head toward Bettina to catch her words.

"Take care you do not hit yourself with the dagger, for I have poisoned it. And, signore, for the love of the Virgin, leave it sticking in him. He will live a little longer and suffer more."

Scarabini nodded and went out. Bettina went on sorting *indivia*. Guido's Maria was not ill. She had taken little Guido and gone to the square with her husband to see the bishop. In due time, Gracia came back, announcing that the doctor would come at once. Bettina handed her a radish and she gave a bite to each of her playmates and finished the remainder herself, leaves and all.

Then the girls played "Lazy Mary," and Bettina went on sorting salad.

The band was playing on the square, and the warm glow of hundreds of incandescent lamps greeted Burroughs's eyes as he approached on his way to Guido's. From end to end of the open space before the church the festoons of light were hung, and the church itself was arched with lights from entrance to towers, where the great twin crosses flamed against the dark sky. Here and there, about the square, strings of Chinese lanterns decorated the fronts of the houses, and scarcely a dwelling failed to have a display of some kind. Brigandi, the confectioner, had decorated his shop window with wreaths of paper roses and a group of candles stuck into bottles. The background was a judiciously selected exhibit of his wares, and all the evening he did a brisk trade in sweets. Di Rocco, the banker, burned red lights, and flung to the breeze his huge *bandiera d' Italia.* As the wind stirred the folds of the beloved flag, many a dark eye in the crowd below grew moist, and visions of vineyards and olive groves shut out the little square. The pavements were crowded. Every one seemed happy. Men slapped each other upon the shoulders, knocked off each other's caps, and indulged in other light-hearted banter

and horse play. Women tossed their babies, and laughed to see them laugh. Boys and girls pushed their lively way through the crowd, receiving a good-natured cuff, now and then, for their roughness. Wrinkled old women sat in the doorways gossiping; old men smoked on the curbings, and lovers drew close together upon the shadowy edges of the square.

In front of the parochial house the crowd was densest, for it was understood that the bishop would appear two or three times during the evening to bestow the blessing of the church upon those who were present to receive it. Burroughs saw him emerge, bowing and smiling. The people burst into cheers of enthusiasm, and "*Viva!*" they cried, "*Viva il Vescovo!*" again and again. The bishop was a man of benign and commanding presence. His white hair was crowned by the purple hat of his office, and the simple Italian folks did well to love him, for he had spent half his life in caring for the interests of the immigrant people, saving them from a dozen perils upon their arrival in this strange and wonderful land. The old man smiled, the eager people nearest him crowded up the steps to kiss his consecrated ring, and then the slim hand was raised in blessing. For an instant there was a hush, as women crossed themselves and

murmured prayers, and men doffed their caps and bowed their heads. Then the band burst into a noble chorale as the bishop reëntered the house, and the crowd fell back into the square.

Though loath to leave the scene, Burroughs threaded his way across the square. Here and there in the groups of chattering men and women he would hear the word "*dottore*," as he passed. Now and then a friendly head was nodded in his direction. Then he turned down into Benediction Alley, the darkness in front of him, the blaze of light at his back.

Suddenly something fell against him. He heard a groan, and turned quickly. A man lay in a miserable heap just behind him, and two Italians were struggling with something just beyond. They were Carbone and Guido. Burroughs did not see the man with whom they grappled. He stooped over the groaning heap at his feet. The crowd shut in around him.

"Stand back!" he cried, fiercely, and his word was obeyed. The lights of the illumination shone in upon the white face, which Burroughs lifted up toward the fresh night air. Then he found himself trembling strangely, for the face he saw was that of John Maxon.

The bishop was standing on the parochial steps

and beckoning. Burroughs saw this through a sort of mist. Then he realized that Guido was helping him to lift the wounded man, and together they bore him within the residence. The parish priest led them into a quiet room, and they laid Maxon upon a couch. An Italian doctor from the crowd had entered with them, and he pulled out bottles and gave a stimulant, and staunched the wound in Maxon's breast, while Burroughs stood by as helpless as if he had never heard of medicines.

As soon as he dared, Guido spoke excitedly, and with furious gestures.

"Bad Italiano come behind-a wit' stillett' to kill-a dottore. Dees man-a jump quick-a! Knife stick-a een 'eem. You understan'?"

Burroughs could hardly comprehend.

"To stab me?" he asked, slowly. "A man was going to stab me?"

"Yes-a, yes-a," reiterated Guido. "Bad Italiano come-a so — still-a, still-a. Dottore no see. Dees man see an' jump. I see; Carbone see. We hold-a quick zee man. My God! It eez Scarabini!"

As if the muscles had suddenly relaxed, Maxon's eyes opened. They were not the blank eyes of the dead, and they turned toward Burroughs.

"Years I have loved you," the faint voice said. "I came to you, and found you poor. I could not help you. You have helped me. The man speaks the truth. Somebody came behind. Thank God I was in time. . . The debt is part paid . . . Doctor! Doctor! Where are you?— Don't leave me. . . . We . . . will . . . fight it . . . out . . . together. You have her eyes. . . . I was not mistaken in you . . . so good . . . so kind . . . so . . ."

The voice trailed off into silence. The eyelids snapped downward, and Philip Burroughs knelt with his arms about a worn-out, wounded body. One thought surged through his mind: "He died for me, he died for me." Then the tears came and blotted the dead face from his sight.

Guido crossed himself, and tiptoed out of the room. He made a genuflexion to the bishop as he passed the drawing-room, and went out on the steps. The square was in an uproar. Women were running to and fro, crying and wringing their hands. Boys and men were crowding around the patrol wagon, eager to get a glimpse of the prisoner, a struggling young man, who fought fiercely for his freedom. Carbone was in the wagon, going to the station house as a witness, and as he emerged from the parochial house,

Guido was taken in charge by the police for the same purpose.

The news of the attempted attack upon Burroughs spread quickly through the crowd, and when, fifteen minutes later, he appeared in the doorway, a great shout of joy went up from the square below. Coming from the hush and awe of the death room, he stood as one dazed, looking down upon the sea of faces crowded toward the steps where he stood. Then he heard cries: men, women, and children calling "*Viva Dottore!*" and "*Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!*" It was the first time Burroughs had ever experienced the thrill of eager eyes upturned, expectant, to his own. A new sensation surged over him as he looked down upon the tumult of swarthy faces, and heard the vivas ringing for him as they had rung for the bishop so short a time before. In some way his eyesight seemed very keen, so that he could distinguish the faces of people in the crowd who had come to him for help in times past; people whose interests he had made his own. There was Forti, the fruit dealer, whom he had brought through the typhoid fever; there was young Vincenzio Broglio, whom he had got into the Convalescents' Hospital after great difficulty; there was Pastorelli's wife, with her apron at her eyes; there was Maria, holding

up little Guido on one arm, and waving her free hand toward him; there was the wife of Razzetti, whose dying baby he had christened. For an instant, too, came a vision of the little white house on the quiet street. But it faded, and the eager, loving faces surged in upon his sight. Then he understood; they were the reality, the other was the dream. The band crashed out the "Imperial March," the people cheered and clapped their hands, and a woman, breaking from the throng, rushed up the steps, dropped upon her knees, and seizing his hand, kissed it again and again.

It was the poor, crazed mother of little Rosa Carbone.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE CRY OF THE PEOPLE

DAY dawned at last. At the first trace of light Burroughs lifted his head from his pillow for perhaps the hundredth time. His face was haggard, his eyes were burning; he shivered like a man with the ague. He rose and made his toilet as best he could. Then he went into the office and sat down before his desk in the half light of the early summer morning. The struggle was over; the battle was fought; the cry of the people had triumphed. But the little "back alley" had been a soul's Gethsemane that night.

When it was light enough to see, Burroughs wrote a letter to the Board of Managers of St. Luke's accepting their proposition. A little later he went out and posted it. Then he came back to the office and dozed at his desk.

After her breakfast La Signorina came out of her house to go to the office as usual. Her heart was heavy, for her attachment to the interne was very sincere and his narrow escape from death and

approaching departure from St. Luke's made her sad. A child called from a third-story window, —

"Signorina! Signorina! My mother wants the doctor ter vatstinate my Carmella so 's she c'n go ter school next fall. Will he go away soon?"

"He has not yet gone," said La Signorina, not looking up.

"What? What did yer say?"

"I say," called the nurse, impatiently, "he has not yet gone, but he will go to-morrow."

"All right!" called the girl.

Pietro's wife was sweeping her sidewalk.

"Did you hear how a man did try to kill *il dottore* last night?" she said in awestricken tone.

"Yes, yes," said the poor nurse. "You think I have no ears! There is no other talk overnight but *il dottore, dottore, dottore!*"

"And think you he will go away?"

"Certainly. Will he not hate all Italians because of Scarabini?"

"I think yes. But some Italians love him very much. Will he not stay for them?"

"Hush!" cried the nurse, turning away. "How can you expect it?"

"Signorina! Signorina!" a faint voice quavered behind her. She turned about. It was Grandfather Monti. He had grown very deaf and feeble

of late, and was quite out of breath from hurrying up the hill.

"Is he dead?" he asked, plaintively, in Italian. "Is he dead?"

"No!" exclaimed the nurse, putting her lips close to the old man's ear.

"The Virgin be praised! I heard only that a man struck at him with a knife. Then they all talked at once and so I could understand no more. They forget the old man wants to hear the news. — And he is not dead!"

His voice broke off and the tears sprang into the weak, old eyes.

"A poor man whom he had befriended, jumped in and received the blow," said the nurse, speaking very distinctly.

"Yes! The blessed saints preserve their own! The doctor is a kind and good young man. Never too busy is he to speak kindly to old Monti. He knows not Italian, but he shakes my hand and says 'Com' sta?' close to my ear and I hear him. Too often the young forget how lonely the old folks grow. But he does not, — the saints protect him!"

"He has kind words for all," the nurse murmured. "Good-by, old father, good-by."

The old man hobbled off with a smile like winter sunshine on his seamed old face.

"He is alive — alive!" he said, softly. "What a night I have passed thinking he was dead!"

Miss Cutter, for some reason, had not heard the news. That Burroughs was expecting to leave the dispensary was the last information about him which she had secured. As the nurse approached, the old woman put her head out of the window.

"Lar Seenyer Reener! Lar Seenyer Reener!" she screamed, "what yer goin' ter do when yer dar-tory goes away?"

The nurse stopped. "I not know," she said, almost sullenly. "I not want you to talk of it. I not bear you say that he go."

"What 'll yer Eye-talians do?" persisted Miss Cutter, pushing the probe.

"I not know. I not know," murmured the nurse with a gesture of despair. "I care not for myself, but so sorry am I for my poor people. So good has Doctor Burr's been to them. I cannot bear that he go away."

She hurried to the dispensary door and let herself in. It was very quiet. She looked into the waiting-room and then into the office. Burroughs sat at the desk with face buried in his hands.

"Dottore!" exclaimed the nurse.

Burroughs raised his head and turned his haggard face toward her.

"My good friend," she said, coming toward him, "you cannot know how much I do thank heaven that you are safe."

"Thank you, Signorina. It was a strange experience. The man who died was Maxon, you know."

"Yes, I know."

"He is to be buried to-day. Poor fellow! And he died for me."

There was quiet in the room for a moment. Then La Signorina said, —

"It is well that you stay no longer here. You are so sad and Spring Hill will be always horror to you now. It is best . . . but, Dottore, how sorry will be my poor people . . . and I, too. You have been like brother to me. I not like you go 'way."

For the first time in many an hour Burroughs smiled.

"You dear, good soul," he said, "I am going to stay here and help you work for your poor people. I have written to the Board this morning."

He held out his hand and she clasped it in both of hers. The tears stood in her eyes.

"Dottore, Dottore, is it true? Ah! How much have I now for which to thank heaven!"

They sat talking eagerly of new methods and

enlarged work, and Burroughs planned with an intensity of interest that was hysterical. But when the nurse was gone and he had started out for the serious work of the day, the reaction came. The morning seemed an interminable horror; the inquest, the inquisition of the press representatives, the arrangements for Maxon's burial. But it was passed at length, and Burroughs was ready for the only tribute he could pay to the man who had died that he might live. The service was held at the undertaker's rooms and the mission worker from the avenue read the service for the dead. When it was over and Burroughs stood looking for the last time on the face of the poor wreck whose devotion had saved his life, the undertaker came to him quietly and handed him a small, black locket, suspended from a ribbon.

"I found this hanging around his neck. I saw it was n't a scapula, so I took it off, thinking you might like to have it."

Burroughs took the locket mechanically and opened it. Then he found himself suddenly very attentive, and an exclamation of surprise burst from his lips. The locket contained the portrait of a beautiful young girl, whose eyes strikingly resembled his own in their earnestness of expression. It was the face of Burroughs's cousin Caroline,

whom he had idolized in his childhood and who had been to him a glorified saint since her death, twenty years before. She was an orphan and lived in his home like a daughter of the house. She used to playfully call him her little brother, and there were some people who never knew that the relationship was not that of brother and sister. Confused memories filled Burroughs's brain; the dying words of Maxon sprang to his mind and a recollection of something he had heard came back to him: something about some one who had loved his sister and now loved him for her sake. But his brain was too weary for consecutive thought, just then.

"You may replace this," he said, quietly, as he handed the locket back to the undertaker, and then he went forth, the only mourner to follow Maxon to his obscure grave. He rode thither alone, tremulous and dazed, his soul benumbed and his mind a chaos. Caroline, Maxon, Margaret; the living and the dead. The dead were his forever. Only the living was denied him. The forces that hampered him were physical; the conventions that thwarted him were material; and life itself was the obstacle which seemed to rear a barrier more powerful than the grave.

CHAPTER XXIV

AT THE END OF THE PIER

MARGARET WORTHINGTON came up Spring Hill Street quickly, her head erect, her cheeks flushed, and her eyes alert. Miss Cutter, peeping from her window, saw the girl coming.

"Hi, there!" the old woman cried; "hi, there! Be yer lookin' fer the doctor? He ain't there. He 's gone out. Want anythin' special?"

Margaret paused with the eager look still lighting her face. Miss Cutter inspected her with care, deciding that she was a pretty looking girl and "real pretty behaved, too," she told La Signorina afterward.

"I wish to see Mr. Burroughs on a matter of business," she said, in her well-bred way. "Can you tell me when he will return?"

"Wal, no, I can't, 'n' what 's more, Lar Seenyer Reener, she 's out too. Won't yer come in 'n' wait?"

Margaret stopped to consider while Miss Cutter's shrewd old eyes bored in and in.

"She 's his gal, I bet," mused the old woman.

"No," Margaret said after a moment, "I 'll call again a little later with the hope of better success."

"All right, my dear, all right. I can't say fer sure when the dar-tory will come back. You 've seen, p'raps, in the paper that he 's had a tryin' time. That runner fer the Spanish doctor tried ter kill him last night and them Eye-talians jest went crazy over him."

"Yes," said Margaret, "I read about it. Mr. Burroughs had a narrow escape."

Tears stood in the old blue eyes.

"Yes, miss," said Miss Cutter, with a gentleness few had ever seen in her, "yes, it was a narrer escape. Seems 's if I could n't er had that good little man kilt. But yer know, p'raps, that he 's goin' off, soon 's he gradoo-ates. They don't stay long to St. Luke's. Jes' when folks gets us't to 'em, they gradoo-ates 'n' off they goes."

"They are eager to begin their life work, I suppose. But it is hard for the poor people," Margaret replied.

Miss Cutter had wiped her tears aside and was her picturesque self again.

"Lor' sakes!" she piped, as if her momentary weakness must be buried under a mountain of strident talk; "Lor' sakes! They hain't been no

doctor here ter St. Luke's that was as good ter the poor folks as the dar-tory — too good, I says, fer them dirty Eye-talians. He 'll trot 'round all day, mebbe, in the rain, 'n' come draggin' home, wet as sop, and a-luggin' that everlastin' little bag er medicine, ser tired he can't hardly walk up the hill — I 've seen him — and what 'll I hear next but that he 's got some sick Eye-talian child in his own bed, and him a-sittin' up all night with it. Ask him about it 'n' he 'll say 'Oh, I 'm studyin' the case.' You remember one uv them times? You was the lady what helped take care er one er them children."

Margaret nodded assent.

"Wal, I just know it 's more 'n ter study the case he does them things. It 's cause he loves them dirty critters. He 'd rather be good ter some Dago than ter eat, er sleep, er have a new suit er clothes — 'n' he needs one very bad, I 've been a-noticin'. Oh, he 's good, he 's good! He 's about the only one I ever knew that wan't makin' a show er doin' good fer what he could get out uv it."

"I thank you very much for what you have said about Mr. Burroughs," said Margaret, earnestly. "He is all and more than you have thought him."

Miss Cutter looked shrewdly at the young wo-

man. Then she beckoned with her thin forefinger, and, leaning out of the window, whispered in the ear Margaret turned toward her, —

"Say, be you his gal?"

"Yes," exclaimed Margaret, "I am his girl." And she spoke with the proud confidence a woman might feel whose right it was to say, "I am the queen!"

"I thought so, 'n' a nice, pretty lady you are, too. God bless yer both. I wish yer good luck. 'N' I'll tell yer where I 'spect yer'll find that good feller uv yours. He 's down on the pier beyond the park. Went down fer a breath er fresh air after supper, he told me as he went by. Oh, yes, he 's a gentleman. He always stops ter say a pleasant word ter me as he passes."

Miss Cutter held out her hand and Margaret pressed it warmly. Then she crossed the street and went through the burial ground and down over the terraces toward the pier. The boys were playing ball on the level near the water's edge, but they stopped to let the lady pass and she walked out on the pier. Many eyes followed her, as she made her way along the promenade, but she was quite unconscious that she attracted attention. She saw Burroughs at the end of the pier and she fixed her eyes upon her lover.

After the feverish struggle of the previous night and the painful tasks of the day, Burroughs had come at sunset to quiet brain and nerve with the touch of the salt sea breeze. He, too, had walked through the old graveyard, envying the sleepers for whom the stress and heartbreak of the world was over, yet revolting against his own thought as he remembered how narrow had been the margin which had separated him from the silent ones less than twenty-four hours before.

On the terraces the children had shouted after him, running up to greet him, and he had shaken all the grimy hands with a new heartiness. On the pier the Italian folk were catching the breeze; fathers and mothers with babies in arms, and little ones toddling to and fro, or sticking their tiny faces between the bars of the railing to look down at the water. Some of these people had put themselves in his way, and shyly smiled; some, bolder, had called his name and waved their hands. To all of them he had nodded good-naturedly or spoken a word of greeting. Thus he had walked onward, as if in the presence of his new-found fate, till at last he reached the extreme end of the pier.

How beautiful the water was, and how keenly he enjoyed the salt air! It must be much to him

now, this city-circled harbor, for between it and the towers of Santa Maria he was to toil for many a day, and toil alone. He knew now that it was better Margaret had been denied him; better, though every day's labor must end in a dream of her. He could never have asked her to share this dull, repulsive round of duty with him, to leave comfort and refinement to make a home for him here in this wilderness of dirt and poverty. He was glad that he had not seen her all these months; glad, too, for that afternoon when he heard her singing in the little room at St. Luke's. Her voice he would bear with him in his heart to the end of his life — and as he mused thus, he heard it at his side.

"Phil, dear!"

"Margaret!" And then, after a pause, "Why have you come here?"

"Because I love you, Philip; because you have been so near to death, and were alone. Oh, Phil, if I had lost you!"

"But your father?"

"Listen, Phil. Father came home this afternoon and found me crying over the newspaper. He put his arms around me tightly, and said, 'My little girl shall not suffer any longer. Your lover is a good man. Go to him.' Then he told me

how all the time since he sent you away he has been watching you, and has heard nothing but good of you. And because you have kept your word to him, he is glad to let me keep my promise to you. Why, Philip! Are you not glad to see me?"

Burroughs's face was white and set; he drew back, and stood gazing at his companion with an unutterable agony in his eyes.

"Margaret," he said slowly, "if you knew — Margaret — Margaret!"

Then he spoke more calmly, holding the rail with tightly clinched fingers, as if to steady himself.

"Margaret, I have reached a new decision about my work. I am not going to that place Raymond picked out for me. I am going to stay here at St. Luke's. They want me to build up the work. They will give me fair pay and better lodgings. So I am to remain.

"I cannot explain how I reached this decision. I discovered what I must do last night in the square when the people all looked up at me as if they cared for me. I cannot explain it to you; I cannot make you understand, but I know that my work for the present is here, rather than in a pleasanter place. After all, in spite of the wealth

our family once had, we sprung from humble beginnings. I belong to the common people, and my place is with them."

They stood close together now, and were silent, he thinking savagely of himself for having stated the case so clumsily, she feeling that his closing words had been the loftiest she had ever heard him utter.

"I shall never degrade you by asking you to join me in these surroundings," he went on, at length; "so you must go back to your own circle, and forget me. It has been terribly hard for me to relinquish the hope of having you for mine, some day, and the sight of you now is almost more than I can bear. But duty is duty, and I must face it. If only — if only I might kiss you just once more, Margaret, darling!"

The harbor voices were calling; the shrill soprano of tug and tender, the deeper tones of ferry and steamboat. Behind the lovers the sunset flamed gold and red, glorifying all the dingy region which was Burroughs's destiny. They two were facing eastward, where the vapory masses of purple-blue cloud, with a flash here and there of a rosy sail, held a nameless charm hardly secondary to the western glory. The blue lights of arc-lamps flashed out along shore; the laughing voices of

children fluttered in the air; the bells of Santa Maria tolled slowly for vespers.

Where the river and harbor met, two tugs, making their last trip for the night, pulled a long, low-lunging line of mud-scows to the dumping space in the lower bay.

"See, dear heart," Margaret said, softly, and her tone thrilled him, so expressive was it of love and trust and holy peace; "see the work they are doing. How heavy and how ugly it is! But it is not hard for them because — they are together."

And the earth and sea and sky that Burroughs saw were tinted with the radiant hues of Paradise.

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